THE AMERICAN WEST

The cover illustration for this issue is a detail from W. H. D. Koerner's vivid 1923 painting "Moving the Herd," a panoramic oil now in the Whitney Gallery of Western Art at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. During the 1920s and 1930s, German-born Koerner (1878–1938) produced countless illustrations for the Saturday Evening Post *and other magazines and books, interpreting the cowboy and his era to a public yearning for a simpler time. Eugene Manlove Rhodes was among the* Post *writers whose stories Koerner illustrated; an incident from the life of that western writer begins on page 4 of this special issue on the cowboy's West.*

DANE COOLIDGE COLLECTION, BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

In a photograph made circa 1909–14, western writer-photographer Dane Coolidge, using the relatively unsophisticated equipment of his day, has frozen a peak moment of action as a new mount meets its master in a corral of the Chiricahua Cattle Company. Coolidge's images of ranch life—which preserve for us a near-vanished way of life—rank him with such other leading practitioners of the genre as Andrew A. Forbes, Erwin E. Smith, and Charles J. Belden. An introduction to Coolidge, followed by a portfolio of his photographs, begins on page 32.

CULVER PICTURES

AT FIRST GLANCE, this tranquil western scene may appear to be the real thing. But a closer inspection reveals the slick hair, handsome face, and clean shirt of the West that Wasn't, a region as familiar to us as the authentic West. Posing here in a mid-stream still from *Dodge City Trail* is actor Charles Starrett, a stellar representative of the Saturday-matinee West whose 132 films for Columbia Pictures made between 1935 and 1952 did much to promote the mythic West in the public imagination.

According to C. L. Sonnichsen, we need that slicked-up West; it's as important to us as the real one. For his views on the two Wests and what they mean, turn to page 8 of this issue.

THE AMERICAN WEST

THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN HISTORY

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NEW MEXICO INCIDENT

An episode in the life of western writer Eugene Manlove Rhodes

by W. H. Hutchinson

"OUTLAWS," A PAINTING BY W. H. D. KOERNER, 1878–1938
COURTESY OF RUTH KOERNER OLIVER

MARCH 13, 1899 . . . In the "can see" light before dawn, three men were active in the HG horse corral on the eastern slope of New Mexico's Caballo Mountains. They had "laid out with the dry stock and watered at night" for some eight months past. Now the time had come to end their fugitive status—one way or the other. Two of them—Oliver Milton Lee and James B. Gililland—had been on the dodge for cause: warrants charging them with murder were in the hands of Patrick Floyd Garrett, the tall, droop-moustached slayer of Billy the Kid, now sheriff of Dona Ana County. The third man, Eugene Manlove Rhodes, had been with them for the compelling reason of friendship!

None of them were feckless, fiddle-footed boys; neither were they yet stiff in the knee hinges. Each was in his early thirties, when the heart and the hand are most nearly in accord. Lee and Gililland were sons of Confederates, Texas-born, and raised there into their teens during the hardhanded Reconstruction days. Rhodes was Nebraska-born and Kansas-raised, son of a colonel from Illinois who had soldiered valiantly with Grant down the Mississippi. Lee and Gililland were "cowmen from who laid the chunk." Rhodes was a horse rancher by choice, a bronc rider by inclination, and a writer by aspiration.

Oliver Lee was a tall, lithe man with small hands and feet, a fine head, and seemingly wide-spaced eyes. He was fastidious as to his person and his toilet, even in the rough living imposed by his calling, and his ranch house held a surprisingly large library of classical literature. He had not been raised to run from trouble; he was but newly married, and the long months of exile had been plain pure hell.

Jim Gililland was big in every way—broad, thick, and tall. Red-faced, convivial, very handsome, he had a zest for life in every form, and his laugh would blow off its hearers' hats if they were not throat-latched. On the ground, he seemed awkward: lumbering as he walked, leaning forward from the waist, his boot tops reaching to his knees and his trousers poised on the points of his hips in per-

petual defiance of the law of gravity. His seeming awkwardness was of a piece with the shambling shuffle of an untroubled grizzly.

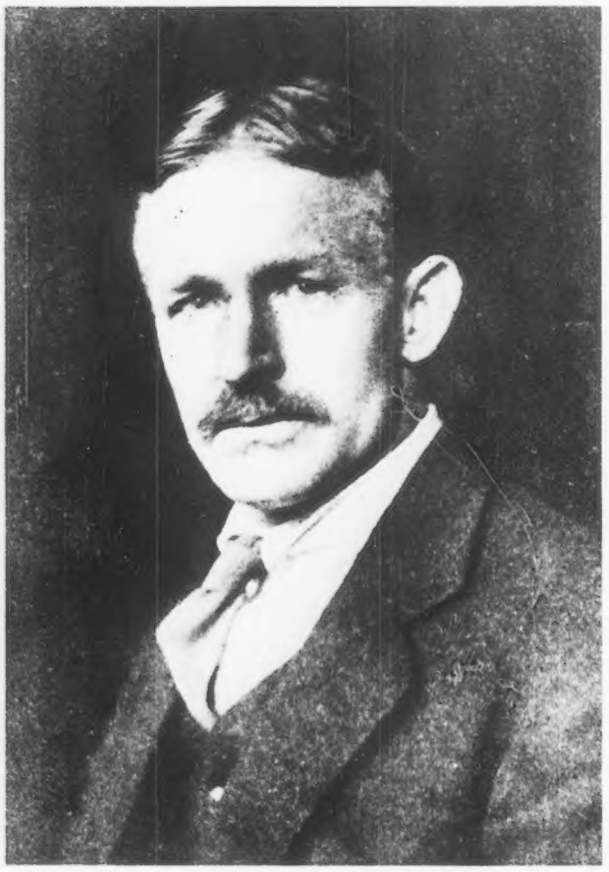
'Gene Rhodes's wiry slenderness and medium height made him seem even smaller than his 140 pounds. A finely moulded neck, prominently corded, set off the almost Grecian sculpturing of his features, which were enhanced by a luxuriant thatch of mouse-colored hair and abundant, sandy moustaches. Every man or woman who ever knew him commented on the pale-blue pupils of his eyes, which never seemed to contract or dilate but looked through whatever they saw and beyond. A cleft palate had plagued him since birth, making his own pronunciation of his name come out *Do*des or *Th*odes, depending upon the ear of the hearer. He was hard to understand at best and incomprehensible when excited. He was a fiend in a fight, and his broken nose and finger forever tendon-cramped from stopping a knife that had aimed for thicker meat bore witness to his reputation.

On the other side of the ledger, marking him as a most singular man, was the fact that Rhodes had a poet's soul and a scholar's passion for the printed word. Several of his poems already had been published in a Los Angeles literary magazine, *Land of Sunshine*. He had spent some of his time with Lee and Gililland composing four biting verses in rejoinder to Rudyard Kipling's famous "The White Man's Burden" and had seen them printed in a long-forgotten suffragette paper in California called *The Oakland Saturday Night*. Rhodes, moreover, adhered to his self-determined principles no matter what the cost.

It has been noted that Lee and Gililland were cowmen —men of substance, with valuable cloven-hoofed property and some investment in land, wherever such ownership was absolutely necessary to control the water that spelled life or death in the cow business. Lee, in fact, had just sold one of his holdings to the El Paso & North Eastern Railroad for a site on which to erect their town of Alamogordo when he was forced into exile from his home range in the Tularosa Basin.

Rhodes had an eighty-acre homestead in the crest of the San Andres Mountains where some judicious, if highly illegal, fence building had given him control of an additional hundred sections of the public domain. He raised horses there—but not even his upgrading of the cold-blooded Spanish stock could make his venture profitable in a land where the feral mustang bands were an unmitigated nuisance. Rhodes, always, was "hubbing hell on a starve-out spread." However, when the Boer War broke out in 1899 and Her Majesty's Government came into the Southwest seeking any crock and every stick that could walk to the railroad, Rhodes refused to sell his horses. His sympathies were with the Boers. The fact that Rhodes had little to lose but his life, and that was his alone, may explain the part he played in the eight months' drama and its final act.

COLLECTION OF THE AUTHOR



Eugene Manlove Rhodes (1869–1934) wrote western stories and novels, many based on his life in frontier New Mexico. But there was one incident he never wrote about: the 1899 episode when he hid out and helped two friends accused of the politically motivated murder of Albert J. Fountain and his young son Henry.

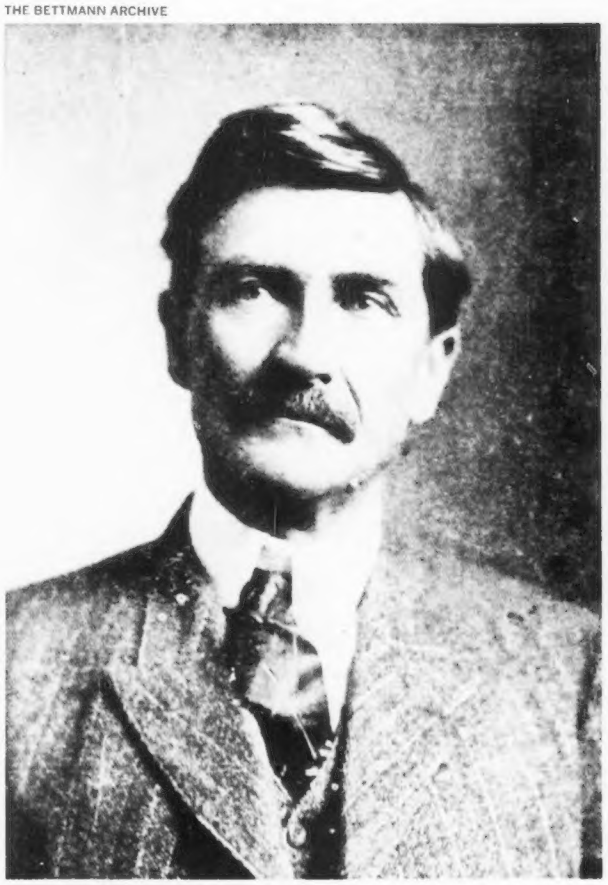
Rhodes and Oliver Lee had a disagreement before they left the HG ranch. All three men were long-haired, bearded, and more than a little unkempt from the exigencies of the months just past. Lee was determined to shave and array himself in decent, clean clothing to face whatever the day might bring. The most prominent article in this welcome change was a new, large, center-creased, almost white Stetson of XXXX quality: Oliver Lee's personal ensign.

Rhodes had opposed this reversion to type, contending vehemently and with reason that the more they looked like saddle-tramps, the better their chances of survival until they could reach their presumed sanctuary at the home of the district judge in Las Cruces, county seat of Sheriff Garrett's bailiwick. Rhodes won every point but one. Lee was wearing his new hat when the little wind that brings the dawn sprang up and a pale band of sky to eastwards outlined the chipped-pottery crest of the San Andres.

They rode a little south by east, slanting down onto the great upland *bolsón* called *Jornada del Muerto,* "Journey of the Dead," since Juan de Oñate first had passed that way in 1598. Their destination was Aleman—a nameboard siding and telegrapher's shack on the branch line from Albuquerque to El Paso. The siding called Cutter was closer to the HG ranch, but it had been arranged that the Bar Cross wagon, which is to say the riders for the Detroit and Rio Grande Live Stock Company, would be camped at Aleman that morning. The men of the Bar Cross were 'Gene Rhodes's friends and they were not unfriendly to Lee and Gililland. They would be at Aleman to spell *HELP* in case anything went wrong with the elaborate plans that were being brought to fruition.

The scope of these plans will seem incredible today. The necessity for such plans also will seem incredible, even after Watergate. Politics was so intertwined with the social, economic, and daily personal life of New Mexico that it colored every act and thought, distorting them beyond belief. Politics made the Gordian knot in the tangled skein of events that rode with Rhodes, Lee, and Gililland towards Aleman on the morning of March 13, 1899, and it must be understood if the other threads are to be seized by their loose ends.

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

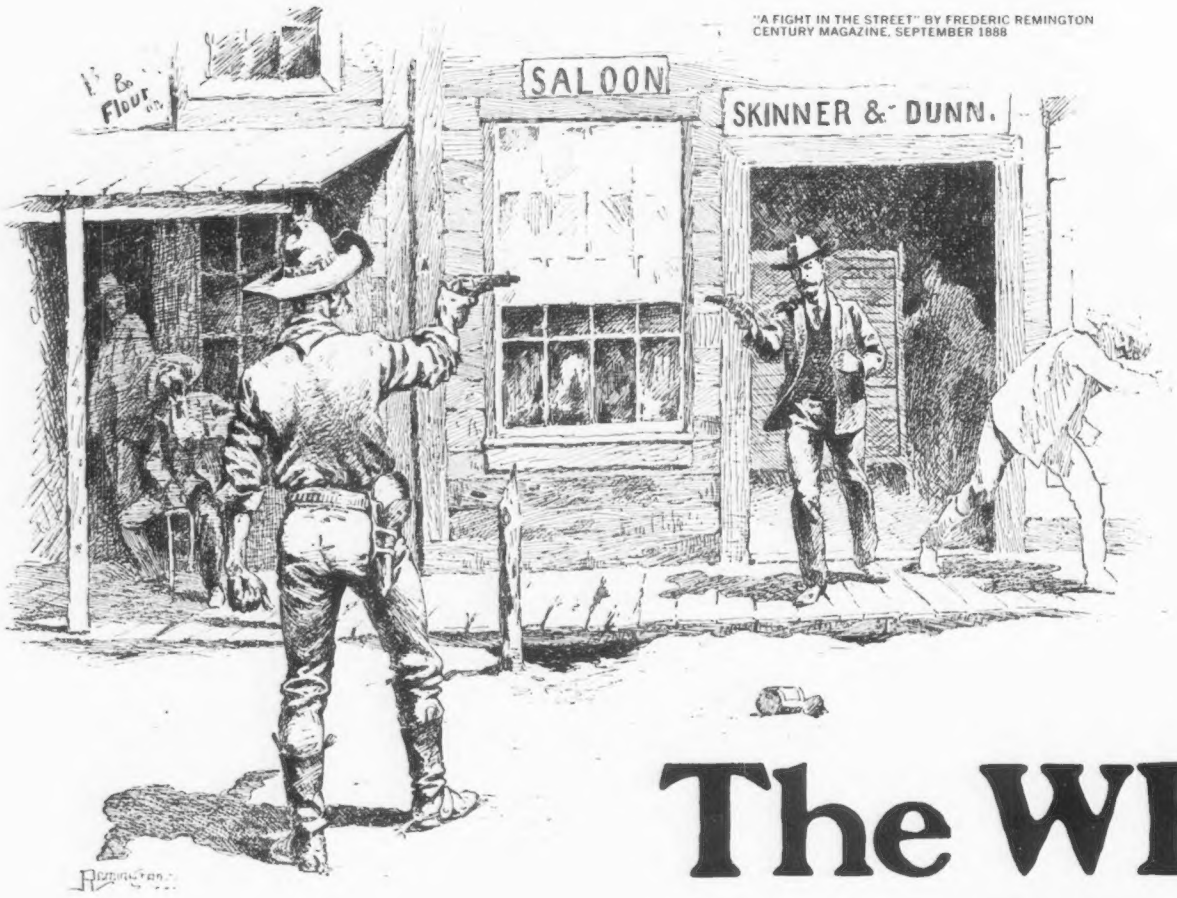


Patrick Floyd Garrett (1850–1908), already well-known as the slayer of Billy the Kid, hoped to double his fame by solving the Fountain murder case. As sheriff of Dona Ana County, New Mexico, he swore out warrants for the arrest of 'Gene Rhode's companions—leading to a confrontation in which Rhodes played a starring role.

NEW MEXICO HAD BEEN A TERRITORY for fifty-three years. General Stephen Watts Kearney had made the first promise of statehood in the dusty plaza of Santa Fe in the very moment of conquest, so to speak, and his promise had been echoed down the years by politicians of all parties and every degree of specious sonorousness. New Mexico still was a territory, imposing second-class citizenship upon her people and affording a most convenient means of rewarding aspiring, deserving, defeated, or retired party servants, plus their kinfolk, in-laws, and friends.

New Mexicans were allowed to elect their county offi-

Continued on page 59



"A FIGHT IN THE STREET" BY FREDERIC REMINGTON
CENTURY MAGAZINE, SEPTEMBER 1888

The WEST that WASN'T

by C. L. Sonnichsen

W. H. HUTCHINSON, the sage of Chico, California, likes to talk about the West that Was, implying that what we usually get is the West that Wasn't. He is quite right. We Westerners, and in a sense all Americans, live in two Wests—the real one and the more-or-less phony one that we get in the movies, on television, and in the paperback novels. There is a wide gray area between the two extremes, of course—we have to admit that. What we find hard to admit is that we hold dual citizenship and are quite comfortable in our two Wests—that we want and need each of them; that our national well-being depends to some extent on maintaining free access to both, the unreal as well as the real one. If we did not have the phony West to fall back on, we would be in a bad way.

At the moment, however, we seem to feel that we ought to make a choice—that we are committing some sort of intellectual bigamy if we don't. The cry is for "authenticity," even in commercial or "formula" fiction. When William Decker's *To Be a Man* delighted the critics and reviewers in 1967, Wallace Stegner called it, in a dust-jacket pitch, "as authentic as sagebrush and dirt." It was, too, but Stegner was praising it for the wrong reasons, as if he were complimenting a go-go dancer on her virtue. Decker was painting the old-time cowboy as a misfit in modern times, but his real purpose was to show that the old times were better than the new. By implication he was talking about the West that Never Was. "Authentic" details in a standard or near-standard or substandard Western are usually no more than a few lines and creases on the old familiar face of the Wild, Wild West. Fashions change. The pulps disappear. Zane Grey's novels become period pieces for graduate students to anatomize. But the West that Wasn't remains essentially unchanged. It is so much a part of the American consciousness that no infusion of realism can take it away. We can't and won't give it up—because we need it.

SOME SPECIFICATIONS may be in order at this point. For an introduction to the West that Wasn't, look at the activities of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center in Oklahoma City—an institution that exists to keep pioneer days in the West from being forgotten, to keep alive the West that Was. It has a lot of money behind it and can afford to keep alive anything it wants to. The facilities are first-class, including an art gallery, a library, a museum, a magazine, and an annual awards

night which pays tribute to the best artists, writers, actors, moviemakers, and musicians who have worked in the western field during the preceding year and in years gone by. The 1975 awards gave special recognition to several "classic" movies including *The Westerner* (1940) starring the late Walter Brennan as Roy Bean, the Law West of the Pecos. A scene from the film was shown in which Bean sentences a man to hang and sees that the sentence is carried out. This is a fine example, though the management apparently did not realize it, of the West that Wasn't, for Roy Bean never hanged anybody. He was really a small-time sharper whose ultimate ambition was to cheat everyone who passed through Langtry, Texas, on horseback, on foot, or on the Southern Pacific Railroad. He threatened a few noisy offenders with the noose, but it was all bluff. He could have sued the National Cowboy Hall of Fame for defamation of character if he had been alive and aware of the situation.

In 1972 he could have sued director John Huston and writer John Milius for a more violent assault on his character in their film *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*. Milius made him a bank robber and a gunman, roles which were far beyond him in real life, and administered a final insult by having him sing "The Yellow Rose of Texas" to his Mexican sweetheart. Bean could growl and perhaps grunt, but he was incapable of song.

Milius defends his fantasies in a note preceding his script, published as a book in 1973: "To pompous historians—any similarity to historical characters, living or dead is purely accidental. If this story is not the way it was—then it's the way it should have been and furthermore the author does not give a plug damn."

In spite of Milius's determined boorishness, there is something to be said for his attitude. The purpose of this essay is to show how much and why we need the West that Wasn't and why we pay freebooters like him to seize the body of history and reshape it to conform with our desires, dreams, and illusions. If, as he says, it wasn't that way, we encourage him to change it, not so much because we want to as because we have to.

At the same time, with an ambivalence which is not easy to understand, we reject illusion and demand the truth. Readers, writers, and viewers who do not understand our basic needs rebel against authors and directors who make the Old West more violent—and more interesting—than it really was. Regional historians opened the battle as early as the 1940s by exposing some of the most admired western heroes, particularly Wyatt Earp and other of his stripe and era, as something less than the perfect gentle knights painted by their biographers. In reality they were no braver or wiser or more efficient than many other men, but they attracted writers with epic imaginations.

The authors of Westerns caught the infection next. Members of the Western Writers of America have come to pride themselves on their firsthand acquaintance with the western background, and on the depth and thoroughness of their research. Louis L'Amour and Will Henry have been classified, with considerable justification, as historical novelists. Henry in the WWA *Roundup* calls on his fellow writers to "Tell It Like It Was" and urges them to "protect and defend that past by recreating it faithfully." It would no doubt surprise L'Amour and Henry to hear that their tremendous readership remains loyal not because of but in spite of their faithfulness to life; that fantasy, not fact, sells those millions of copies; and that this is as it should be.

It is also true that a great many western novelists are expressing their disillusion with the romantic West not by striving to present a faithful picture but by making fun of the whole business and turning the hallowed conventions upside down. Take for example Gary Jennings's 1975 opus *The Terrible Teague Bunch*, about an attempted Texas train robbery in 1905. The dust jacket announces: "Here is the real Old West; this is the way it was." An early scene begins: "It was a crisp October night, cold for Nacogdoches at this season, and a brisk wind was whipping dust, old newspapers, stable chaff and dried horse manure down the unpaved streets."

Zane Grey could never have written that.

L. R. Foyt, the old cowboy who plays the leading role, wears bib overalls and implies that all sensible cowboys do the same. "More pockets to carry things in." And Foyt conceals his six-shooter in the bib. He explains:

"Nobody but the actors in Wild West shows ever did that face-off-and-reach-pardner performance. If you had reason to shoot a man, it was far more sensible to dog him unawares and shoot him in the back . . . but if it ever come to a face-to-face encounter, it was blamed foolishness to have your gun hanging out where your opponent could see you grab for it."

The bib-holster method of gun toting made for some interesting strategic possibilities:

"Say that you, an ordinary nonprofessional somebody, had to throw down on somebody. . . . First you looked away from the other fellow, maybe over his head, and looked thoughtful, as if you'd just discovered you had a flea in your chest hair, then you stuck your hand inside the bib to scratch yourself, and then you brought your hand out full of pistol."

One of Foyt's victims thanked him, as he was carried out, for the lesson in the technique of "itch-scratch-shoot."

Jennings's attitude is only one example of a fairly general reaction against the familiar and traditional concept of the West that Wasn't, a concept that has been passed on from generation to generation since the days of the dime novel. A fair percentage of the Westerns that are being screened or published now are tongue-in-cheek Westerns, burlesque Westerns, funny Westerns. The way to write a Western now is to kid the Western. Script writers and novelists have been working together for a long time to undermine the myth, and any reasonably perceptive buff

WHEN YOU CALL ME THAT, SMILE. AN ILLUSTRATION BY ARTHUR I. KELLER FROM OWEN WISTER'S THE VIRGINIAN, 1902.

can remember a dozen or two examples without effort. The list could begin with *The Ballad of Cat Ballou* (1956) and would include such novels (and the movies made from them) as *The Ballad of Dingus Magee* (1965) and *True Grit* (1968). Notable but not so well known are *Sure Shot Shapiro* (1968), *Liveliest Town in the West* (1969), *The Kid* (1972), *Jellybean* (1974) and *The Road to Many a Wonder* (1974). The spoof-Western *Blazing Saddles* was a special event of 1974. The next year saw the publication of *The Man Who Believed in the Code of the West, The Truth about the Cannonball Kid, Dolly Purdo,* and the WWA Spur Award winner *The Shootist,* a bitter takeoff on the career of Texas gunman John Wesley Hardin. John Reese's *Blacksnake Man* (1976), with complete disrespect for the conventions of the Western, makes a conquering hero out of a tenderfoot with a blacksnake whip.

Movies like the *Missouri Breaks* and *Buffalo Bill and the Indians* are late examples of a long line of irreverent takeoffs, and television, with features like "The Quest," is making contributions of its own. Superviolent Westerns are part of the revolt—a *reductio ad absurdum.* The anti-hero (Larry McMurtry's Hud, for example) is part of it. Everybody is climbing on the bandwagon. The reaction has gone so far that we may soon be seeing a whole new set of stereotypes—completely fantastic, like Richard Brautigan's *Hawkline Monster* (1974) or completely realistic with horse manure blowing down the streets of Trail Town and cowboys in bib overalls bellying up to the bar.

THE CURE in these cases is without doubt as bad as the disease. For the West that Wasn't, the West of Zane Grey and Owen Wister, of "Gunsmoke" and "Rawhide" —what might be called the Violent West—was not completely phony. It was real enough; it just wasn't real all the time. The violence was there. Conflicts and feuds and shoot-outs did exist (they still do). Nesters and big cattlemen did confront each other. Indians did wipe out whole families of settlers, and wronged individuals did pursue their foes seeking revenge. The traditional moving-picture, soft-cover West is made up of selected bits of reality; but the implication that the Violent West was the true and complete West is, of course, wrong. The troubles of the pioneer Westerner were mostly nonviolent: isolation, loneliness, boredom; back-breaking toil; mortgages; grasshoppers; blizzards; drouth; sickness; old age and death. Only a small percentage of frontiersmen died of lead poisoning.

The fact remains, nevertheless, that many of us have no curiosity about grasshoppers, but we know and care about gunmen. The Violent West is more real to most of us than the reality. We have seen it and heard about it all our lives. It is all some Americans know about their own history and all that many foreigners will ever know. It has crept into our minds and conditions our attitudes toward a great many things—the Indian and the Mexican, for

instance, the handgun and the horse, the whole process which we used to call "The Winning of the West."

Even in what is left of the range country, the West that Wasn't is cherished and believed in. One night some twenty-five years ago when I was working on a book about the mid-century cattleman, I camped under a bridge on the Rosebud River twenty-one miles west of Miles City in Montana; and after supper I walked to Bill Hayes's ranch house nearby to get acquainted. I noted that there was a bookcase in the big living and dining room and found that it was devoted almost entirely to the works of Will James. The Real West was taking lessons from a skilled purveyor of the Imaginary West, and who knows how much men like Will James have done to fix their fabrications in the collective mind?

The two Wests are there, both real enough, and we are at home in both of them without even realizing it. The question that needs to be answered is why? Anything so characteristically American and western ought to be explained.

Henry Nash Smith came up with part of the answer when he published his enormously influential *Virgin Land* in 1950. Smith regarded popular literature, particularly the dime novels and their descendants, as a sort of sociological barometer. Writers do not create, he observed. They respond—to the prepossessions, revulsions, and assumptions of their readers. They have to if they want to keep on selling books. The significant thing about a Beadle and Adams dime novel is what it tells about the consumer. Of all the popular arts, fiction reveals the most since it reflects the dreams and fantasies of the great mass of people.

Smith's approach was so illuminating that it caused a small avalanche of follow-up studies during the fifties and sixties. All assumed that popular literature answers basic needs in the reading public. But there was no agreement about what those basic needs were, and as the years went on, theorizing about them progressed from the simple to the complex.

Time magazine found the simple answer in 1959 in a famous essay called "The American Morality Play." The Western, it declared, is an allegory of human life and death in which the forces of good (in white hats) and the forces of evil (in black hats and five-o'clock shadow) fight it out on the huge western stage. Evil always loses. The viewer or reader goes his way fulfilled and satisfied, convinced that the universe is in good hands.

The year 1956, a turning point in the history of the form, brought the eternal struggle into Everyman's living room. *Time* continues:

"Tail over dashboard, wild as a herd with heel flies, the U.S. television audience is in the midst of the biggest stampede for the wide-open spaces since the California gold rush. T.V.'s western boom began four years ago, and every season since then the hay haters have hopefully predicted that the boom would soon bust. Yet every season it has been bigger than the last. Last week eight of the top ten shows on T.V. were horse operas. . . . This season, while other shows, from quizzes to comedies, were dropping right and left like well-rehearsed Indians, not a single western left the air. Indeed 14 new ones were launched, and the networks are planning more for next year. Sighs a well-known writer of western scripts: 'I don't get it. Why do people want to spend so much time looking at the wrong end of a horse?'"

Could all this excitement proceed from a desire for assurance that God is in his heaven attending to the management of the world, as "Morality Play" suggests? "Impossible," say more recent analysts, most of them academic people looking for something to analyze; and each one comes up with a new and ingenious explanation for our attachment to the Violent West—so ingenious and so detailed and so learned that one wonders how much more analysis the old, simple, carefree Western can stand. Since 1960 over twenty books and dozens of articles have been devoted to a dissection of western moving pictures alone, the three most important being George N. Fenin and William K. Everson's much-admired *The Western from Silents to Cinerama* (1962, 1973), John G. Cawelti's *The Six-Gun Mystique* (1971), and Jon Tuska's *The Filming of the West* (1976). In 1974–75 three specialists made such important contributions to our understanding of the importance of the West that Wasn't that they need to be looked at.

In *Focus on the Western* Jack Nachbar, a popular culturist from Bowling Green, Ohio, maintains that western movies are "the single most important story form of the twentieth century." They account for "twenty-five to thirty percent of American-made features" and they "define for all classes of white Americans their traditional ethics, values and sources of national pride." Thirteen assorted contributors agree with him. Kathryn C. Esselman finds that the western film is rooted in "the image of the knight and the concept of the quest." Richard W. Etulain looks for its origin nearer the present in the rise of the cowboy hero and in the back-to-nature movement of the early 1900s. Jon Tuska notes its use in recent years as a vehicle for social comment.

Philip French, a University of Texas professor, covers some of the same grounds in *Westerns*. He is interested, as was Henry Nash Smith, in the movies as a response to the hang-ups and fantasies of the viewing public—their changing attitudes toward reality. His basic theory, which many readers may not buy, is that most western films since 1950 are social and political commentaries in disguise. Any director with a message, he believes, can get it stated by making a Western. *High Noon,* for instance, was about "existential man standing alone in the McCarthy era," and *The Wild Bunch* is a commentary on the Vietnam war. Disillusionment with the dominant group has grown steadily, and the "Post Western," particularly as conceived by Sam Peckinpah, is "not a harbinger of a brave new world" but "a symbol of a deadening mass society and a dehu-

TOM MIX IN "THE UNTAMED" (19.

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

manized technology."

The pedagogic function of the Western, says French, is best illustrated in moving pictures about Indians as the emphasis changes in the fifties and sixties toward an idealization of the native American, picturing him as a superior human being and his life as "a valid counter culture, a more organic, life-enhancing existence than white society." In effect, the Western is now part of the literature of protest—possibly of the New Left.

Last comes Jenni Calder with *There Must be a Lone Ranger*. Calder is sensitive to changing emphases, particularly in filmed Westerns—knows that in the sixties the hero became "mean, vicious and self seeking" and that the Western challenged "the glorification of the gunfighter and the simple proposition that the cavalry was the good guys and the Indians the bad guys" while it exposed "the rotten morality of commercialism." But these negative reactions, she says, can't destroy the hard core of the myth. It survives "in spite of history, in spite of progress, and in spite of movies destroying the Western hero." In short, the nonauthentic West is here to stay.

These film historians emphasize the importance of the West that Wasn't in American culture. Calder in particular shows how we remodel history to suit our needs and purposes, and demonstrates how we go about it. A variety of commentators, however, have gone far beyond her in finding reasons for what we accept and demand. The psychologists, sociologists, social historians, and culture buffs are finding new and ever more bizarre explanations for the popularity of the Western, particularly on the screen, and the brilliance of their critical insight is exceeded only by the density of their prose. Kenneth J. Munden, a psychologist, calls the enmity in a standard Western, "a classic symptom of the Oedipus conflict." Several critics have argued that the Western is an expression of the reader's or viewer's sexual drives and have viewed the six-shooter as a phallic symbol. John G. Cawelti discusses "the ticklish subject of the Western as a dream."

Analysis by such specialists has gone so far that a backlash has set in. "The purpose of the popular Western novel is to entertain," Russell Nye trumpets in a recent survey of the popular arts, "and it is effective only insofar as it succeeds in doing so.

"It is written neither to shock nor to titillate; it is neither myth nor epic nor multilevel symbolic narrative. It is an adventure story, good or bad only as it succeeds or fails to come alive as adventure and communicates the Western experience accurately and honestly. Fashionable academic criticism, beginning about 1954, saddled the Western novel with hero myths, fertility rites, quests, ritual killings, and phallic symbolism, very nearly smothering it in a fog of footnotes . . . it is not and never was, as Henry Allen has said, 'mythic or Gothic or parapsychological or a meaningful social document.'"

Who would have thought in the Zane Grey era that the humble Western could rise to such a pinnacle of importance or call forth such conflicting opinions? But it has. And as sometimes happens in a poker game that seems to be getting out of hand, there are calls for a new deck. Leslie Fiedler thinks it is time for a "New Western" and gives thanks to half a dozen authors, including himself, for having broken away from outworn conventions. He defines a Western as any book with an Indian, or at least a dark man (a Black will do) in it. He includes *The Sot-weed Factor, Midnight Cowboy,* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* in his list of new Westerns and classifies Ernest Hemingway's reminiscent stories about his boyhood in Michigan as "crypto-westerns" because they include Indians.

Fiedler is wasting his breath. The western story is indestructible—in no danger of being replaced. "At regular intervals," says Jenni Calder, "the demise of the Western is announced, but the myth retains its vitality." Of course it does. Anything we need, we hold onto—and we need the West that Wasn't.

WHY DO WE NEED IT, demand it, and keep on getting it? This is a serious question and deserves a serious answer. All the critics and historians realize that the explanation lies somewhere in our group consciousness—in our awareness of ourselves as a people or as a nation—but they don't get much beyond that. Jenni Calder tells us that the Western in all its forms "enriches a brief past for the benefit of a possibly barren present." Henry Allen (Clay Fisher, Will Henry) believes with Hal Borland that "when legends die, society goes next and quickly." John G. Cawelti notes that "the Western formula does allow serious attempts on the part of creators and audience to relate contemporaneous conflicts to the American past." Everybody is aware that the Western is responding to a basic need, but nobody tells us exactly what it is.

I suggest that this basic need is a natural and normal hunger for a heroic past. We want to have roots in ancient times like other peoples, but we don't stay in one place long enough to grow them. We move about freely, and some of us live on wheels. Many of us know nothing about our own grandfathers. Pride of family is denied to all but a few of us. Pride of race has to be built. Any group with a thousand-year history has these things provided, but the American is a newcomer and not yet completely at home in his vast country. All he has is the mythical West, and he needs it desperately.

Without it, or something like it, how can he believe in his own destiny, as every ethnic group needs to do? The Jews were the Chosen People. To the Greeks all non-Greeks were barbarians. All tribal subdivisions of the Athapaskan stock on our continent use a word for themselves which translates as "the People." According to Thomas Berger's *Little Big Man* the Cheyennes refer to themselves as "the Human Beings," implying that all other exist on a lower plane. Kipling brushes off colonial peoples as "lesser breeds without the law." All ethnic groups from time immemorial have exhibited this sort of pride, and a certain amount of it is necessary for survival. A nation which does not believe in its own heritage is in real danger.

The American people seem to have stopped believing. Our general attitude is negative—our thinking guilt ridden. We are ashamed of our past and doubtful of our future. We admit that we are destroying our environment. We see ourselves as greedy and materialistic. We confess that we do not know how to live. We have come to believe that our pioneer fathers before us were no good either. One contemporary writer calls the first comers to Arizona "the dregs of their respective societies." The Indians, as we see them now, were better than the whites who conquered them and took away their lands and their living. Having thus lost our confidence in Columbia's Happy Land and in the heaven-born band of heroes who created it, we have come close to classifying ourselves among the "lesser breeds without the law." An individual in this condition would be advised to see a psychiatrist. Unfortunately there is no such thing as a psychiatrist for nations.

We might not be in this situation if we knew who we were; if we had some roots with which to reassure ourselves; if we could look back on, invent if necessary, a heroic past, the way other people do. We need a national myth to help us understand the nature of the universe and our place in it. If our history went back far enough, we too could take pride in forbears who slew monsters, put down oppressors, befriended the poor, spoke with the gods, and in general behaved positively and directly, as we are unable to do.

All we have to fill this basic need is twenty-five years between 1865 and 1890. It was something like a heroic age, and we have done our best to make it into one. Unfortunately it was too brief and too recent to serve the purpose. Too many survivors remembered it, and the facts were always getting in the way of the legends.

I used to know Mrs. Sophie Poe, wife of John Poe who was present when Pat Garrett did Billy the Kid in. During the filming of one of the early movies on Billy, Mrs. Poe was called to Hollywood as an expert on the Kid and his times. She watched the director revise the historical facts until she could bear it no longer. As she described the scene to me, she approached this majestic figure and said: "Sir, I knew that little buck-toothed killer and he wasn't the way you are making him at all."

"Mrs. Poe," came the answer, "I understand your feelings, but this is what the people want."

From his own point of view the director was completely right, and if he had made his motion picture a hundred years later, or even fifty, nobody would have objected. Nobody would have been left who could object.

GARY COOPER IN "HIGH NOON" (1952) CULVER PICTURES

Even so, the protests against the phony West in our time might have been sporadic and ineffective if it had not been for television. In the mid-fifties James Arness, Ward Bond, Richard Boone, Hugh O'Brian, Chuck Connors, Dale Robertson, and Clint Walker became part of our everyday lives. "One day," *Time* magazine sums it up, "these hemanly specimens were just so many sport coats on Hollywood's infinite rack. The next they were TV's own beef trust. Their teeth were glittering, their biceps bulging, their pistols blazing, right there in the living room; it was more fun, as they say in Texas, than raisin' hell and puttin' a chunk under it."

Too much exposure, however, was fatal. The growing myth, the upsurge of faith in the West that Wasn't, brought screams of protest, and revulsion spread like a prairie fire. At the heart of the conflagration was Wyatt Earp as portrayed by Stuart Lake in 1931 in *Wyatt Earp: Frontier Marshal* and by the TV series of the fifties and sixties. Lake invented Wyatt as Geoffrey of Monmouth invented King Arthur and his court, portraying him as Sir Galahad with a six-shooter. The book, said the publishers, was "the straight goods, the real facts, far more exciting than any fiction." Wyatt was "the greatest gun-fighting marshal the Old West ever knew."

"'Did you ever lose a fight?' Lake asked him."

"'Never,' he admitted, and one had to know the man to comprehend the innate simplicity of the answer."

At once the Kansas historians began cutting Wyatt down to size. Frank Waters, thundering out of Taos, New Mexico, called Lake's book "the most assiduously concocted blood-and-thunder piece of fiction ever written about the West, and a disgraceful indictment of the thousands of true Arizonans whose lives and written protests refute every discolored incident of it." Peter Lyon took Earp for an even rougher ride. "Earp . . . and Bat and the others spent so many nights in Dodge's brothels that they were known as 'the fighting pimps.'" Ed Bartholomew followed the frontier marshal's career through two thick volumes and left him with scarcely a shred of credibility. And Earp specialist John Gilchriese of Tucson has described Wyatt to this writer as "a rather pathetic subject."

Earp was, in one of J. Frank Dobie's phrases, "a man suitable to his time and place," and he was useful in the various communities where he served. If his biographers had not tried to claim more than he was entitled to, he could have occupied a modest niche in the gallery of notable frontiersmen. They were not content, however, to accept him as he was, and his canonization set off a whole series of skeptics who assaulted the legend with facts and tried to destroy it. The pro- and anti-Earp factions are still battling so vigorously that it is dangerous to be caught between them. Glenn G. Boyer, writing in 1976 about Wyatt's third and final wife, is under fire from both sides for calling him "a rather complex, brave and sensitive human being—a real likeable man."

Frank Waters remains in opposition and makes an interesting observation about Earp worship. He blames the reader for accepting the myth and kneeling at the shrine. Only a sick person, he thinks, would do it. We are fascinated by the outlaw, with or without badge, because "more than any other he embodies the secret loneliness in all our hearts, the uninhibited lust for violence, the naked fear, the relentless unrest."

A STUDENT OF THINGS WESTERN has an uncomfortable feeling that Waters may be at least partly right, but on second thought he realizes that there is more to be said, and it involves the West that Wasn't. We need heroes. We need a glorious past. Wyatt is shoddy material for myth-making, but he is the best we have so we have brought him up to specifications and used him. Our values were more important to us than truth. Consequently Earp had to undergo a change "into something rich and strange" to give us our desire. When Mrs. Poe and Nyle Miller of the Kansas Historical Society and Frank Waters tried to reclaim us, we refused to be converted. We dragged Wyatt out of his frontier gutter and cleaned him up like a mother getting her grubby little boy ready for Sunday School. As a result, most people will probably believe a century and more from now that "Tombstone was lawless but one man was flawless." Our need for a heroic past is very great.

Jenni Calder agrees. In her opinion, "The days of the Western frontier were brief. For a period of thirty years to produce a figure and all his supporting detail that was going to last for more than a hundred years was something like an instinctive necessity."

That is exactly the point. And the reason for this instinctive necessity follows: With the roots we find in the West that Wasn't, we have a better chance of being not just people but *a* people. This is the truth that Jenni Calder and the others are reaching for: "As long as Westerns are structured with plots and heroes or anti-heroes, in other words, as long as it is acknowledged that the Western cannot imitate history and should not, the myth will survive."

Jon Tuska is even farther down the same road when he concludes his essay on "The American Western Cinema": "I cannot tell you if the Western can survive without heroes. Can you tell me if Western man will survive without them?"

Should anyone have the temerity to announce that the western story is our Old Testament, our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, our *Nibelungenlied*, he would run into heavy weather. He would, however, have some right on his side. Until we can produce our own epics and sagas, the horse opera will have to do as a substitute. **AW**

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LEE MARVIN IN "CAT BALLOU" (1965) CULVER PICTURES

REMINGTON & RUSSELL

Delineators of the American cowboy

by Peter H. Hassrick

OF ALL THE TEMPTATIONS known to students and aficionados of the art of Western America, none is more natural than the desire to compare Frederic Remington with Charles M. Russell. Russell, from the time he first achieved recognition as a painter, carried the title "the Cowboy Artist," while Remington has been called the "godfather of the whole race of pictured cowpunchers." For both, the western horseman was the generative force. They lived to document his era just as it was passing into history; thanks in large measure to their efforts, it will never be forgotten.

Neither Remington nor Russell went west with the intention of pursuing art. Russell left the East for Montana in the spring of 1880 and went to work for the summer on a sheep ranch. A year later, Remington abandoned a clerical job in Albany, New York, and headed west. His destination, too, was Montana, where he planned to "make trial of life on a ranche."

It is interesting to note that both artists began their western careers in wool rather than beef. For Russell, sheepherding lasted only a short time, Charlie admitting ineptitude through indifference: "I'd lose the damn things as fast as they'd put 'em on the ranch." His succeeding eleven years as a night wrangler on a cattle operation were far more gratifying.

Remington always envisioned himself as a cowboy. He lived in a vicarious world of sombrero-shaded punchers, ready to tangle with stampeding herds or that set of unwelcome interlopers the dime novels called "rustlers." A couple of years after his first trip west, however, Remington took up residence on a quarter section of Kansas sheep pasture. Traffic in woolies was moderate in 1883, and Remington's gains could not be counted on the credit side of the ledger. Experience counted, though, and he returned to his native New York with a spirited vision of America's burgeoning West.

For both artists, the cowboy represented the icon of Far West idolatry. For different reasons, Remington and Russell identified with this colorful image—the self-made man, devoid of cultural pertinence, dependent on his own ingenuity, yet servant to the industrial surge which supported his very enterprise.

Remington, with his somewhat more comprehensive overview of historic themes, observed the cowboy with measured perspective. He knew that the era of the free rider and open range was a thing of the past, even when he arrived in 1881. Yet in time he gleaned from the dust and profane histrionics that the cowboy was exemplary of western liberality and the American promise. Remington's vision was always tempered with this enlightened yet quixotic interpretation; the resulting image brought an inquisitive America to a fuller recognition of itself.

Russell was more demonstrative in his pictured testimonial to cowboy life. It was as if he developed as an artist in unison with the era he documented. Russell's initial portrayals, naive in perception and interpretation, echoed the neophyte enterprise with which he identified. As he matured in the role of interpreter, Russell's works became emblematic of the western spirit, the quintessence of all that the cowboy embodied—vitality, understatement, and human nature in soliloquy.

It was K. Ross Toole, past director of the Montana Historical Society, who had the perception to point out that "the real power of Russell's works does not reside in technique. It resides in the fact that he felt, to the very depths of his being, that an era was dying—and that it meant something." Remington also worked and lived on the same premise. Theodore Roosevelt eulogized that because of Remington's devotion to the bygone saga of the American West, "the cowboy and rancher, the Indian, the horse and the cattle of the plains, will live in his pictures . . . for all time."

Together these two artists have given us a pictorial record of the West unprecedented in its richness of observation, imagination, and artistry. In fact they fashioned America's image of the vanished western frontier. Though intending only to relate visually what had gone before, they ultimately became as much creators as purveyors of the western theme. **AW**

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"THE COWBOY" BY FREDERIC REMINGTON, 1902 (DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL)
AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

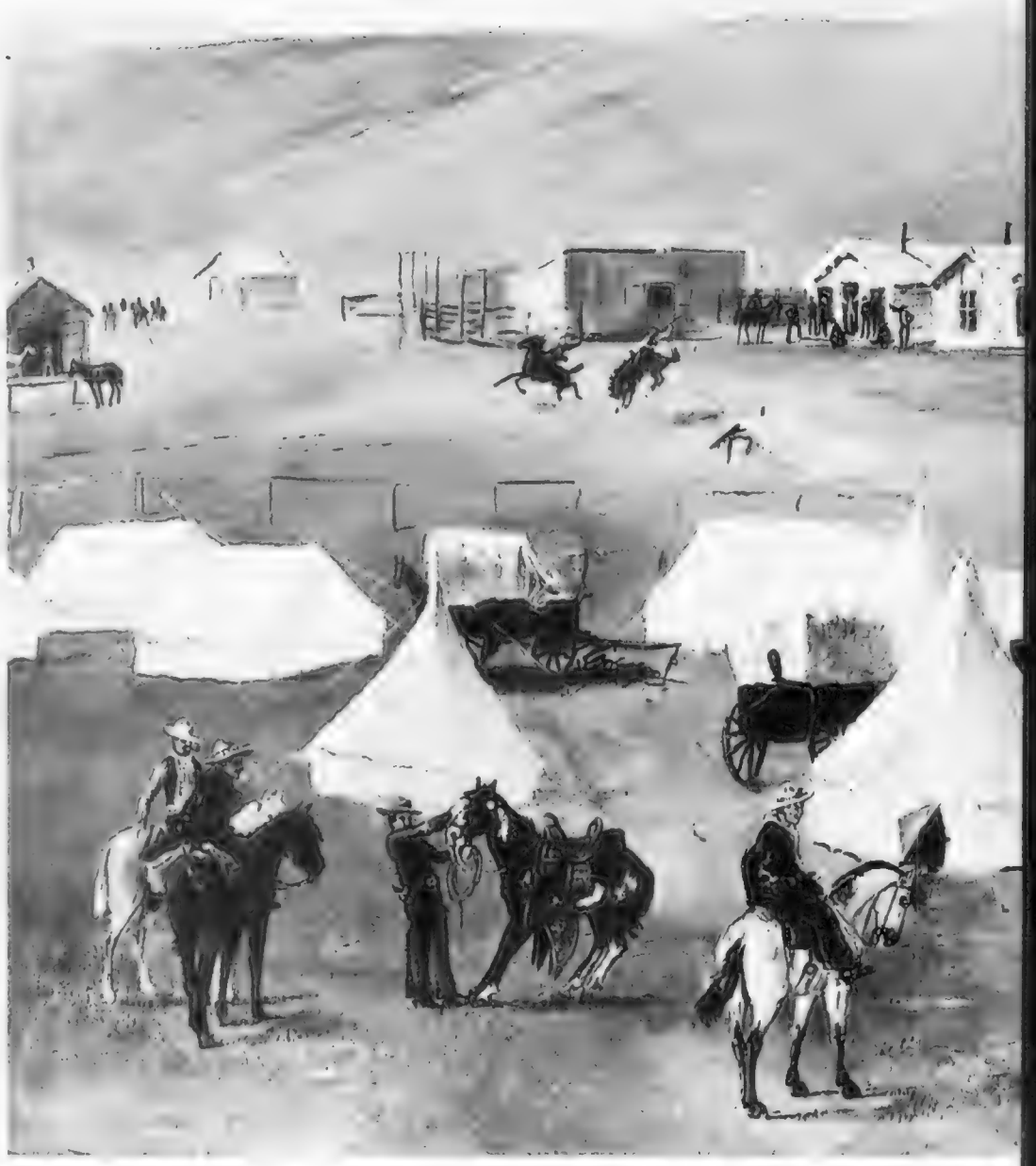
AS A YOUNG GREENHORN on the Montana frontier, Charlie Russell tended sheep, trapped and hunted, and worked cattle and horses as a night wrangler. He also passed many daylight hours sketching and painting, and in these early days when art was still but a pastime for him, he produced one of his first oils, *Cowboy Camp During the Roundup* (right). It was finished in 1887.

Frederic G. Renner describes the picture: "An art critic might call this painting primitive but the Judith Basin cowboys, who could recognize every man and horse in it, thought it wonderful. The cowboys in the foreground, from left to right, are Henry Gray, Frank Plunket, Bob Stevens, Charley Courtney, Henry Keaton, "Slack" Jackson, Pete Vann, Ed Blake, Archie Hayden (waving his hat), Kid Antelope, and Charlie Carthare. Taylor Allen and Jim Shelton (who commissioned the work) are sitting at the corner of the latter's saloon in the middle distance."

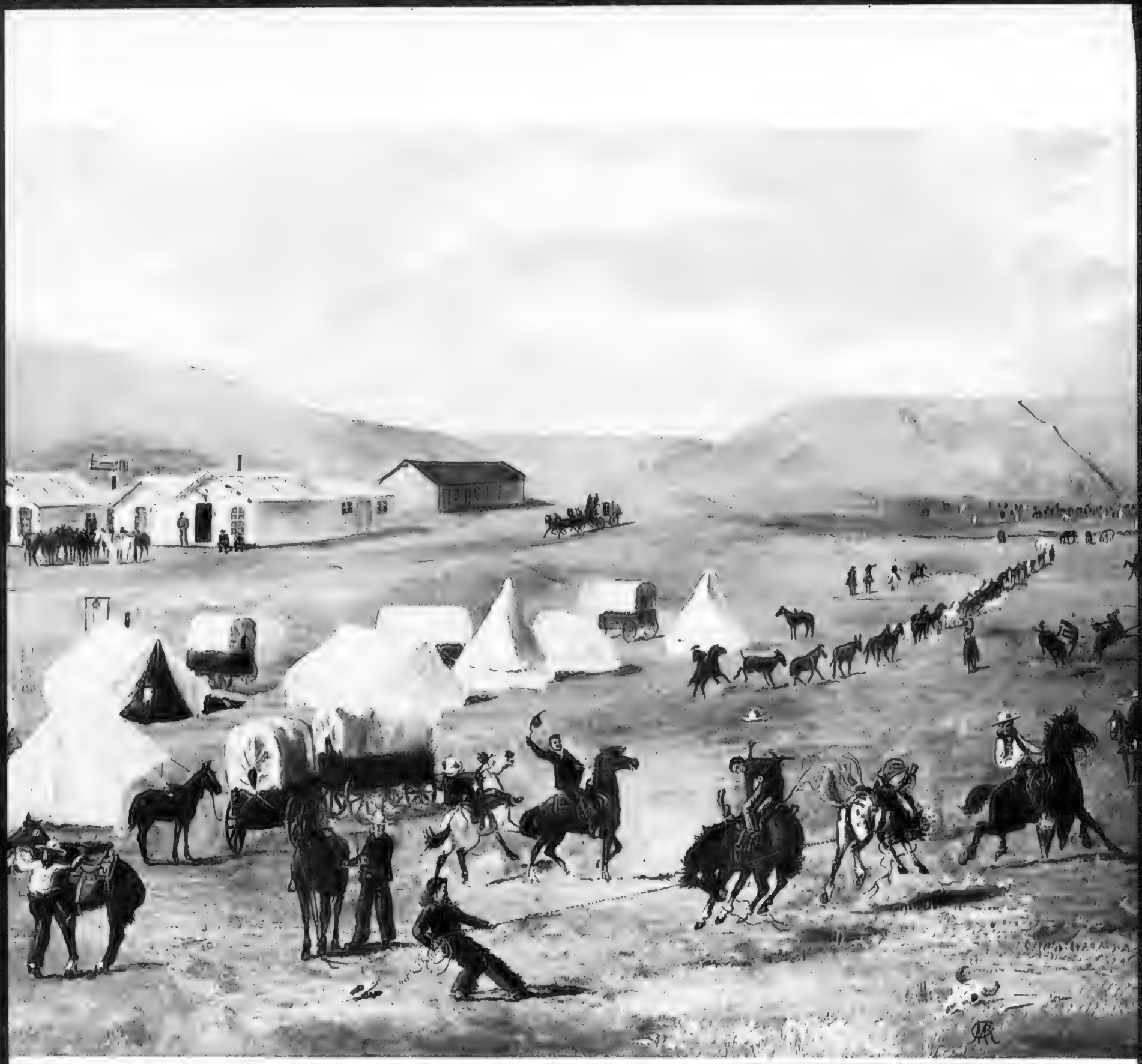
Word of Russell's talent spread rapidly, but as late as 1891 he still entertained no thought of leaving the cowboy life for that of an artist. "He tells us that he is fond of the work," reported a correspondent, "and the only reason he does not follow it is because there is not enough money in it. We believe, however, that in his particular line he has no equal, and that his pictures would, if properly handled, bring him a fortune."

Finally, in 1892, Russell did set up a studio, and his experiences as a cowboy provided inspiration for the rest of his life. Seven years later he painted *Get Your Ropes* (below), portraying himself as the central figure. After singing to cows and stars and fighting heavy eyelids, a night herder probably enjoyed waking the crew at dawn.

QUOTATIONS ARE FROM FREDERIC G. RENNER'S "CHARLES M. RUSSELL" (AUSTIN AND LONDON, 1966) AND THE LEWISTON RIVER PRESS (AUGUST 27, 1891)



"GET YOUR ROPES" BY CHARLES M. RUSSELL, 1899
PRIVATE COLLECTION



COWBOY CAMP DURING THE "ROUNDUP" BY CHARLES M. RUSSELL, CIRCA 1887
AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

"THE FALL OF THE COWBOY" BY FREDERIC REMINGTON, 1895
AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

IT WAS a bleak couple of winters that fell on the Northern Plains in 1885 and 1886, somber in color with their frozen skies and drifting snow, and grave in their impact on what had once been America's most colorful frontier. Blizzards brought more than melancholy and discomfort; they beckoned disaster in their gales. For even those herds and men who survived the cruel winters emerged shaken in the spring. History and fate had turned a new page for them—an era was ended.

Frederic Remington had from his youth embraced the drama of cowboy life. At thirty-four, when he joined forces with Owen Wister to illustrate an article in *Harper's Magazine*, "The Evolution of the Cow-Puncher," the saga of the cowboy was a fundamental part of his life and art. Squinting from under their wide-brimmed hats, feet firmly in their stirrups, Remington's cowboys were barons of a heroic past. They had known the open range, the long drives, the roundups, and the freedom of riding the line. Now, their day was done. Barbed wire crossed the plains in menacing strands, overgrazing forced ranchers to block off fields for hay, and necessary gates along the fences broke the rhythm and dulled the cadence of riding the range. In *The Fall of the Cowboy* (left), this is all told with empathy and reverence.

I HAVE GOT a receipt for being *Great*—everyone might not be able to use the receipt, but I can. D— your *'glide along'* songs—they die in the ear—your Virginian will be eaten up by time—all paper is pulp now. My oils will all get old mastery—that is, they will look like *pale molases* [sic] in time—my watercolors will fade—but I am to endure in bronze—even rust does not touch—I am modeling—I find I do well—I am doing a cowboy on a bucking bronco and I am going to rattle down through the ages."

Thus Remington wrote excitedly to his friend Owen Wister in 1895. He had labored with armatures and clay all that summer, and the results were heartening. No longer was he relegated to a two-dimensional world. His inherent feeling for form in the round was proven beyond a doubt in his first effort, *The Bronco Buster*.

Art critic Arthur Hoeber was quick to recognize the impact of this departure in Remington's art:

". . . The energy and restlessness that actuated the work of Mr. Remington have found another vent, and the transition is not altogether surprising or unexpected. Breaking away from the narrow limits and restraints of pen and ink on the flat surface, Remington has stampeded, as it were, to the greater possibilities of plastic form in clay, and in a single experiment has demonstrated his ability adequately to convey his ideas in a new and more effective medium of expression. . . . It is . . . quite astonishing that the difficulties of technique in the modelling in clay should have been overcome so readily and with such excellent results as this maiden effort shows."

Remington began his career as a sculptor by casting his bronzes with the Henry-Bonnard Bronze Works, who employed the traditional French sand-casting method. Around the turn of the century, Remington switched to the Roman Bronze Works, casting his sculpture by the lost-wax technique. The cast of *The Bronco Buster* shown below is one of about ten produced by the Roman Bronze Works in which Remington adorned his cowboy in woolly chaps. The whereabouts of less than half of these is known today.

FREDERIC REMINGTON QUOTATION FROM THE OWEN WISTER PAPERS, MANUSCRIPT DIVISION, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
ARTHUR HOEBER QUOTATION FROM HARPER'S WEEKLY (OCTOBER 19, 1895)

THE BRONCO BUSTER" BY FREDERIC REMINGTON, 1895
AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

20 MILES TO
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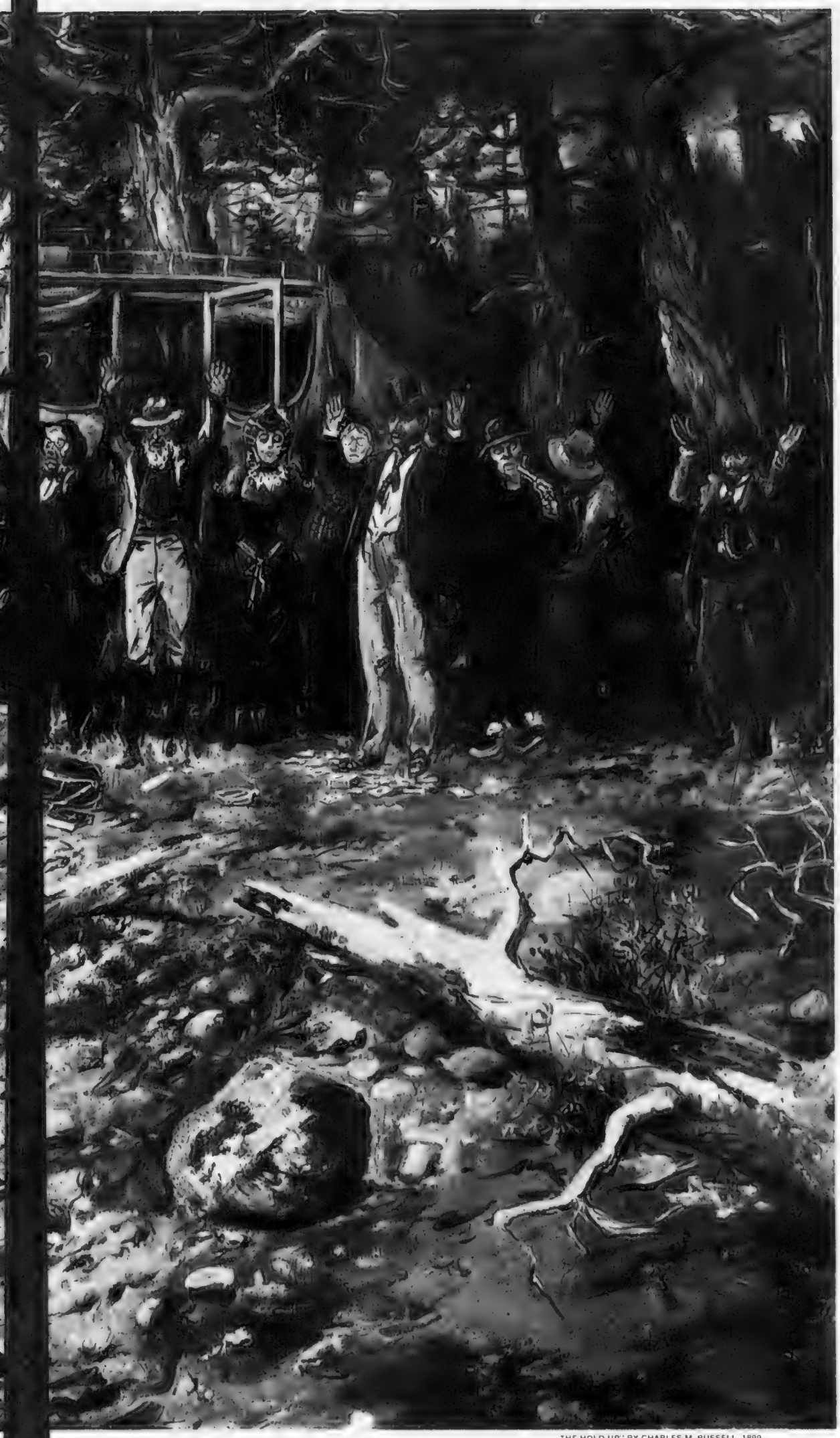


"THE HOLD UP" BY CHARLES M. RUSSELL, 1899
AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

BIG NOSE GEORGE, standing by his white horse in Russell's painting at left, had found that a holdup was "convenient to himself and necessary for the maintenance of his gang of associated robbers in appropriate luxury and magnificence in the town of Deadwood, which was just then at the six-shooter and dance hall stage of its progress from a mining camp toward decency and orderly existence." His philosophy was not appreciated by many.

A colorful assortment of stagecoach passengers was stopped twenty miles from Deadwood that day in the 1880s by three robbers:

"One, swinging down from the saddle and flinging open the stage door, stood with his finger on the trigger, and said, in a cold, businesslike way: 'Gentlemen, you understand the situation. Hold up your hands and step out. Don't offer any objections, please, for it's unpleasant to have to deal with them. Six steps back there. There you are, three in a row and proper as your wife in church. Now, what have you to contribute to the relief of our widows and orphans? My hat is something of a treasure box. Just step up and relieve yourselves of your ready cash.'"

One of the passengers was named Isaac Katz, nicknamed Ikey. Loaded with cash to open a new store, Mr. Katz was relieved of every penny, even that stashed in his underwear. Disconsolate, Ikey asked Big Nose George for subsistence money and was told, "Ah! no, Ikey. I will have to thresh another crop of oats before I grubstake you!" At George's hanging Ikey was heard to say, "Say, George, you thresh them oats yet?"

QUOTATIONS ARE FROM THE GREAT FALLS SUNDAY TRIBUNE (JUNE 30, 1901)

"IN WITHOUT KNOCKING" BY CHARLES M. RUSSELL, 1909
AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

A FUNDAMENTAL PART of cowboy lore revolves around the cattle drive. In the decades after 1850, when railheads were few and far between, drives provided the only outlets for the ranchers' hooved investments and for adventuresome men. Wages were low, troubles plenty—stampedes, blizzards, droughts, swollen rivers, dust, heat, and occasional confrontations with irate settlers and Indians. "Yet the cowboys went eagerly, many of them no more than boys testing themselves against the unknown as other young men had always done by going off to war or shipping out before the mast," notes cowboy writer William H. Forbis.

Besides enduring the test of a cattle drive, a cowboy could make fast friends and feel the pride of working successfully with a team. Perhaps he sensed the historicity of his vocation, for the cattle-drive era was short-lived.

One of his most memorable experiences must have been celebrating with fellow cowboys who had paychecks in hand. Charles Russell was working on a ranch in Judith Basin in the autumn of 1881. His boss and some of his neighbors had scheduled a joint cattle drive, hoping to reach a railhead without encountering winter weather. As a night herder, Russell tended the beeves while the cowhands went to town for pre-drive shenanigans. The next day the revelers related their exploits. Although the artist did not produce *In Without Knocking* (left) until 1909, they later testified to the accuracy of Russell's recollections.

The Hoffman Hotel's owner must have been shocked at the intrusion of his five patrons in such an unorthodox manner. However, cow towns were used to serving a dichotomous and hard-working public—cowhands and settlers. For the former there were a variety of activities, such as gambling, drinking, visiting brothels, and sleeping it off. The settlers traditionally disapproved, while the merchants made a killing.

For Russell the action of cowboy life nurtured his natural bent. A reporter once recorded Russell's comment on an old church painting. "Why if I made that picture, I would have the walls tumbling down." The reporter agreed: "Every picture he makes is revelation and action."

ACTION ALSO DICTATED Frederic Remington's *Coming Through the Rye* (below), a heroic-size plaster replica of which was entitled *Shooting Up the Town*. Ranch life was a little easier than trail life, yet after a week of it cowboys were understandably ready to let off a little steam. Remington's sculpture was praised for recalling "the days when the Saturday night frolic of the cowboys who came to town was the chief social institution of the week in border towns."

QUOTATIONS ARE FROM WILLIAM H. FORBIS'S "THE COWBOYS" (NEW YORK, 1973) AND THE GREAT FALLS DAILY TRIBUNE (APRIL 8, 1906)

COMING THROUGH THE RYE" BY FREDERIC REMINGTON, 1902
BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER, CODY, WYOMING

"THE WAR BRIDLE" BY FREDERIC REMINGTON, 1909
PRIVATE COLLECTION

EXTREMELY INTERESTING has been Mr. Remington's development from an illustrator into a painter," observed New York art critic Gustav Kobbe in December 1909. "It has been slow, not because of any lack of ability, but because there always was such a demand for his illustrative work that he could not very well give it up or even relax from it sufficiently to devote the necessary time to painting as distinguished from illustrating. But the pictures, more than twenty in number, which he recently exhibited in the Knoedler galleries showed him as a painter—and a painter who knew the American Indian, his habits, his life and his abiding places."

Among the pictures in the Knoedler showing was Remington's vibrant *The War Bridle* (left). He knew when he completed this and the other paintings for the exhibition that they would stand as his greatest achievements as a painter. All his life he had wanted to portray horses in motion so that the paint, the contrasts of color value, and the scintillating light would effect the action as much as the physical thrust of the horses on the canvas.

"Wherever he finds them Mr. Remington makes his horses stand out in this way as having something like personality," another reviewer noted. "They are lean, wiry, and mischievous animals that he paints in such pictures as *The War Bridle*. . . . You observe them with a certain zest. They move as though on springs. Their heels play like lightning over the earth. You feel them hurling themselves along in the hunt, going nervously into action to the crack of bullets, or struggling not unthoughtfully with the cowboy who would conquer their trickiness. It all makes an exhilarating spectacle, and these pictures are filled besides with keen, dry air and dazzling light. The joy of living gets into Mr. Remington's work."

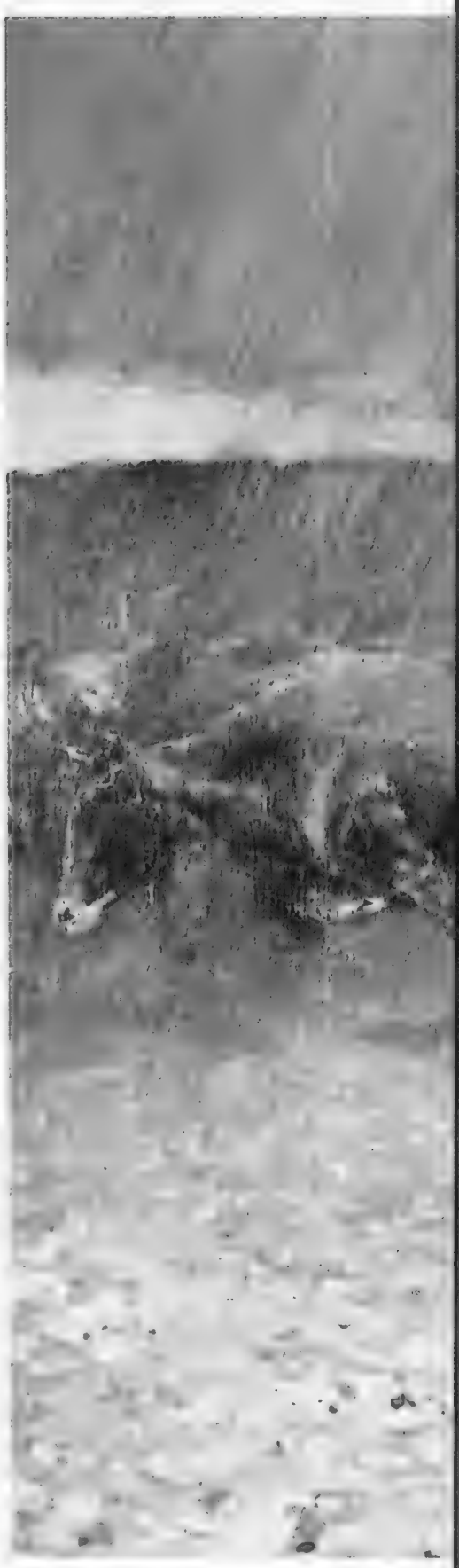
QUOTATIONS ARE FROM GUSTAV KOBBE'S "PAINTERS OF INDIAN LIFE IN THE NEW YORK HERALD (DECEMBER 26, 1909) AND ROYAL CORTISSOZ'S "FREDERIC REMINGTON: A PAINTER OF AMERICAN LIFE" IN SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE (FEBRUARY 1910)

THERE COULD BE no sound more exhilarating than the thunder of hooves as a hunter took up the chase after a buffalo herd, and no sound so devastating as the roar in a cowboy's ears when his beeves spooked and a stampede was on. Get them turned, get them slowed, get them stopped was all that went through his mind. Halt those "bovine meteors" before they destroyed themselves and all that happened into their path. First they must be caught, then guided, then encircled until finally man was once again in control of nature. Sometimes the losses were counted in more than pounds of precious beef: "... That night it come up an awful storm. It took all four of us to hold the cattle and we didn't hold them, and when morning come there was one man missing. We went back to look for him, and we found him among the prairie dog holes, beside his horse. The horse's ribs was scraped bare of hide, and all the rest of the horse and man was mashed into the ground as flat as a pancake. The only thing you could recognize was the handle of his six-shooter. We tried to think the lightning hit him, and that was what we wrote his folks down in Henrietta, Texas. But we couldn't really believe it ourselves. I'm afraid it wasn't the lightning. I'm afraid his horse stepped into one of them holes and they both went down before the stampede."

In both bronze and paint Remington suggested the drama of such senseless terror and desperate human recourse. His *Stampeded by Lightning* (right) spares nothing in the stirring test of man and beast. Set against a blackened sky and the darting horns of a frenzied herd, a cowboy and his pony, numbed with fright and determination, surge for the lead. Harmonized in color and syncopated to the thunder of heaven and earth, Remington's depiction has never been equaled in paint.

The model for a bronze of the same subject stood finished in Remington's studio the day of his death. A few castings were later authorized by his widow, Missie, proving once again that the artist could conceive as boldly in bronze as in paint. In such work as this, Remington's spirit still lives today, confirming for those who pause to consider history and art together, the probity of Owen Wister's observation: "Remington is not merely an artist, he is a national treasure." **AW**

STAMPEDE QUOTATION FROM E. C. ABBOTT AND HELENA HUNTINGTON SMITH'S "WE POINTED THEM NORTH" (NEW YORK, 1939)



THE STAMPEDE, BY FREDERIC REMINGTON, 19
AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

"STAMPEDED BY LIGHTNING" BY FREDERIC REMINGTON 1908
THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART, TULSA, OKLAHOMA

SCORCHED COWBOYS

An old Colorado cowhand's tale

As told to H. Beecher

A good deed does not cost; it pays. In a rest home while I was shaving a paralyzed old-time Colorado cowboy, he told me the following tale of his youth on the range before the turn of the century. He was twelve years old at the time, and it was his first roundup. H.B.

IN EARLY COW-COUNTRY DAYS the Bar X roundup worked the big desert country from the "Tanks" of Yellow Cat in Utah for a hundred miles eastward into Colorado. The finish was in the open country between the canal which furnished water for Grand Valley and the Book Mountains, bounding the valley on the north.

That year the last camp of the Bar X chuck wagon was made on the canal a few miles north of Grand Junction. The day herd was being held in a wide, flat-bottomed draw that ran down to the canal, providing an excellent watering place for the large herd of cattle. Our wagon was camped about a mile farther up the canal at the end of a grassy mesa.

One morning the circle brought in a bunch of spooky cattle from the breaks of Little Salt, and this drive was mingled with the day herd on the flat some two hundred yards from the canal. Dan Kinney, Shorty Bowman, Dave Anderson, and I were left to hold the stock while the remainder of the roundup crew jogged over the hill to the wagon for dinner.

It was a torrid June day, and most of the cattle soon bedded down. There was nothing for us to do but sit there in the blazing sun and wait an hour or more before being relieved so we could ride in for our meal.

A long flume spanned the dry wash where the canal crossed the draw, and through it raced a large stream of crystal-clear water, which formed a whirlpool at the lower end. The pool was some twenty feet across and four to five feet deep—an ideal swimming hole. The temptation to cool off was soon irresistible, so with the cattle placidly resting, we decided to take a swim. We left our horses close to the upper bank, stripped, plunged into the big pool, ducked each other, and began playing around like a bunch of porpoises. Every once in a while one of us climbed up the bank to take a peek at the cattle. They remained quiet. Soon we discovered that by going along some planks we could reach the upper end of the flume. There we fell flat on our bellies and shot through its length. Splash! We plunked into the swirling pool below. I was having the time of my life, secure, like my companions, in the knowledge that from time to time one of us would make sure the cattle were still quiet on the bunch ground. But as the herd continued to show no signs of restlessness, we became more and more absorbed in attempting to outdo each other in various water stunts.

Some time later, realizing that we had been out of sight of the herd for a considerable length of time, Dan Kinney scrambled up the bank to check the cattle. He needed only one glance.

"Good God!" he yelled. "The cattle's gone!"

To a man, we scrambled after him as fast as we could. The tail end of the herd was just vanishing over the mesa to the west, half a mile up the draw. In wild panic we raced for our horses and leaped into the saddles. There was no time to grab clothes. We realized that the recent gather of renegades from Little Salt which had been thrown into the bunch were headed back where they came from, with the hungry day herd strung out behind them.

THAT was a wild horse race across the flat. Lacking even the modesty of an Indian G-string, we four naked cowboys rode like a Ute war party. But the fiery desert sun had been beating down on those empty saddles for more than half an hour, and when we lit in them with our moist, naked hides you could fairly see the steam rise. We'd stand up in the stirrups, but the iron ones then in vogue were hotter than the saddle leather, hotter even than the cinders of hell. We'd flop back into the saddle, only to repeat the futile action every few seconds in a desperate effort to keep clear of both sizzling saddle and burning stirrups.

After the excitement of that first burst of speed, and sensing the absence of spurs, our old cow ponies began to lose interest in the chase. Kicking them with bare heels had no effect, so each of us jerked out a length of hard twist from the riata at his saddlehorn to lash his steed to greater effort.

We caught up with the leaders about a mile out. By then they'd hit a nice swinging trot and were covering ground fast. We finally managed to head them off and get them milling in a tight ball, but we couldn't start them back as long as the string of cattle kept coming on to swell the ball bigger and bigger. Many of the day herd were quite jaded from being held so long, and when we at last got them going toward the bunch ground, it took a lot of persuading to keep them moving at all.

Meanwhile, the scorching sun beat down. Our bare hides were beginning to fry. When we finally had the bunch under control and could manage to spare one man at a time for a few minutes, he'd sprint for the ditch bank, scramble into his boots and clothing, and race back; then another nude rider would whip down both sides of his horse as he in turn made for his clothes.

Somehow, we kept the cattle moving in the right direction, so that by the time the last unclad form was fully clothed, the herd had arrived at the bunch ground and was beginning to settle down once again. At that moment, the first of twenty-five roundup riders appeared over the rise a couple of hundred yards away. Riding with the group was the boss's sweetheart and her chum who had come out from town to "see the roundup"!

The boss eyed the cattle, all suspiciously on their feet, glanced at our very sweaty horses, and remarked in a sarcastic tone, "You fellows better go eat."

The four of us ate our meal in silence—standing up.

Following the roundup, it was several years before I again encountered Dan Kinney. His first words to me were, "Hello, Kid! Been swimmin' lately?" **AW**

H. Beecher *of Canon City, Colorado, recently completed one career as a federal civil servant and is currently embarking upon a new one as a budding free-lance writer.*

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN HAMPTON,
COWBOY ARTISTS OF AMERICA

DANE COOLIDGE
western writer and photographer

by Owen Ulph

ASIDE FROM Agnes Morley Cleaveland's single vaporous paragraph in what Ambrose Bierce once scoffingly called the "warmed-*Overland Monthly*" and a scatter of ganted obituary notices appearing at the time of Dane Coolidge's death in 1940, the career of this talented western writer and photographer has been inexplicably ignored. In some ways, such obscurity is a blessing in disguise. Scholarship often buries its victims beneath an avalanche of pedantic rubble: witness the fate of Frederick Jackson Turner. Emma Rogers, one-time sagacious proprietor and operator of Nevada's RO ranch, used to claim that if too many overeager hands were sent in search of strays, all they did was tromp out the tracks and round up one another. Left alone, strays usually come in by themselves—in better shape than when choused.

Dane Coolidge was primarily a naturalist—a classification almost as odious to current "knowledgeable experts" as alchemist, astrologer, or gentleman. A naturalist is curious about everything. He is an incessantly vigilant observer who displays skeptical reservations about abstract theory and retains empirical respect for "lore." Reality scorns arbitrary definition and specious quantification, and at those frustrating points where scientific certainty vanishes in the brush, lore blazes the trail. Lore does not become dogma unless, like any form of belief, it ossifies into a Baconian "idol." Lore is functional—practical. Pragmatists like Coolidge (with which the frontier was well-supplied) congenitally devise techniques and strategies designed to work. "I was not a regular photographer," Coolidge admitted. "I seldom sold any pictures and just took my camera along as a bluff so that the cowboys would let me follow the round-up. I was really scouting around for story material." Canny perceptiveness alerted Coolidge to the terrors and potential casualties of the dude syndrome. "Unpleasant things are likely to happen to you if you admit you know how to ride," he observed shrewdly. "So I always wore a small-sized hat and told the cowhands I was just a photographer, and unless given a gentle horse I was liable to fall and break my camera."

Coolidge noted that a cowboy, unlike superstitious primitives, "likes nothing better than to have his picture taken, mounted on his top horse." Consequently, instead of subjecting him to ritual tenderfoot-baiting, the cowhands took him into protective custody and solicitously cooperated with his camera work. By the time high-speed shutters, telescopic lenses, and specialized filters had been developed, the range cowboy had become virtually extinct. Coolidge's range-country photographs were obtained just in time, most being made between 1907 and 1916. His inspired, amateur subterfuges resulted in a collection of some of the best action shots of legitimate cowhands actually engaged in working stock that have ever been taken.

{ *A portfolio of Dane Coolidge photographs follows on pages 36–47* }

ALONG WITH a substantial segment of his generation, Coolidge was smitten by the burgeoning Western Myth and sacrificed, to a limited degree, his sober anthropological investigations to write more than forty works of fiction. Bernard DeVoto insisted that novelists could have the Old West myth or the historical West, but they couldn't have both at the same time. Coolidge would have refused to admit the validity of DeVoto's contention. He strove to reconcile fact and fancy. His stories, he maintained, "were not written to be sagas of the West, but to record as accurately as possible the lives of famous fighting men." He disparaged the school of writers who have given us a bloodier West than history records. Despite insistence upon accuracy, his sense of drama and his conviction that the West *was* romantic, condemned him to produce "horse operas."

In his fiction, however, Coolidge avoided the gross vulgarizations of the cowboy myth as if he were riding around a swamp. He understood the realities which initially provoked the vulgarizations and wrote about them in a manner and style that was unlikely to curry favor with the typical western fan. His wars between ranchers and nesters, between cattlemen and sheepmen, are not equestrian ballets punctuated by glorified gunfire. They are ugly. Men fight more with curses than with bullets. With despicable cruelty and insensitivity, they destroy each other's livestock. Animals are slaughtered on a ruthless scale amid much bellowing, bleating, and blood. Bill Dhue, modeled upon that fearless range detective Tom Horn, cultivates bushwhacking as a standard tactic. What has happened to the Code of the West? It is there, but subdued—subordinated to common-sense behavior and plausible instincts of survival.

Coolidge's characters, both good and evil, are neither complex nor profound, but they are not stereotypes. How is the average reader to react to a hero who rants at a Bible-blubbering squatter, "This land is mine. My father took it from the Indians and I'll hold it against the world. I don't give a damn if your children all starve. If you don't like the country—move out!" Or to a sanctimonious villain who never packs a gun and consumes the time he should be working his fields and tending stock praying God to smite the hero to death? Or to a villain whose hand trembles when he points his gun at his enemy and is wedded to a termagant who shouts at him, "That's all you think of—making gun-plays with that six-shooter! And what has it ever got you? They's a hundred men I know of that hev stomped you into the ground fer it—and took away yore gun to boot." These characters and situations were not constructed in the spirit of broad satire or blatant parody found in *North to Yesterday* and *Blazing Saddles*. If it is humor, it is sinister humor. Coolidge treated his characters and situations with an ironic irreverence more typical of H. L. Mencken and Ambrose Bierce than of Owen Wister or Emerson Hough. Mencken and Bierce re-

BOTH PAGES DANE COOLIDGE COLLECTION, BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

FAMOUS IN HIS DAY for his fast-paced Westerns, author-naturalist Dane Coolidge may well be appreciated in the future mainly for the historical authenticity of his work in fiction, nonfiction, and photography.

Born in Natick, Massachusetts, in 1873, Coolidge moved with his family to Los Angeles in 1877, when it was still a raw country town. There, as he roamed its fields and orchards and neighboring mountains, he began his lifelong interest in the flora, fauna, and people of the West.

By the time he was an undergraduate at Stanford, Coolidge was a competent naturalist, employed by the university as a field collector of mammals, reptiles, and birds. In succeeding years, as he traveled the West collecting for the British Museum and the Bronx and National zoos, he also photographed western scenes and gathered material on cowboy life.

Once during this period Coolidge forayed east to do graduate work in biology at Harvard. But he found the atmosphere deadening and his Massachusetts relatives provincial. Determined to live life rather than read about it, Coolidge soon headed west again.

While still in his twenties, Coolidge began to incorporate the western lore he was acquiring "by sitting around the fire with my mouth shut" into a series of short stories and novels. Among the more than forty Westerns he was to write in a prolific lifetime were *Hidden Water* (1910), *Bat Wing Bowles* (1914), *The Law West of the Pecos* (1924), *Silver Hat* (1934), *Wolf's Candle* (1935), *Snake-Bit Jones* (1936), *Rawhide Johnny* (1936), *Hell's Hip Pocket* (1938), *Comanche Chaser* (1938), *Gringo Gold* (1939), *Wally Laughs Easy* (1939), and *Yaqui Drums* (1940).

But the cowboy was not the only western figure to catch Coolidge's interest. Together with his wife, Stanford sociologist Mary Roberts Coolidge, he made several studies of the Indian. They collaborated on *The Navajo Indians* (1930); and, in the year before Coolidge's death, *The Last of the Seris* (1939), written from material the two had gathered while living for several months with the Indians of Lower California.

Coolidge died in Berkeley in 1940. His papers, manuscripts, and photographs are now in the Bancroft Library in that city.

garded the mass of the people as boobs and the West as a breeding ground for every brand of human folly. Cowhands shared the attitudes of Mencken and Bierce without having read either of them. Coolidge possessed the sense of the satanic and appreciated the power of the perverse. He was equipped to write intelligently and sympathetically about his subject.

The intellectual level of Coolidge's work is considerably above that of Zane Grey, William MacLeod Raine, and other far more successful competitors for the patronage of gunsmoke addicts. Coolidge knew the West consisted of factors more elemental than Indians, rustlers, and fast-draw buffoons. He knew the mining industry and the demonic forces that scorify the earth. The intricacies of money, banking, and the stock exchange were not mysteries to him. He was fully aware of how the entire financial structure could be manipulated by audacious confidence men and the diabolically possessed. He would have found the treatises of Keynes and Scarne elementary.

Indeed, the range of Coolidge's knowledge and experience and his concern for maintaining fidelity to fact prevented him from exploiting melodrama on the tawdry scale necessary to assure wide popular appeal as a novelist. Coolidge was more considerate of his subjects than of the readers who comprised his "market." W. H. Hutchinson attributed the success of the popular western writers to the fact that they were "writing from the *outside in* for people who lived on the *outside*" and couldn't care less whether the writer's material was authentic or not. Western writings were "two-dimensional and lacked depth because readers could understand this form and demanded it."

Coolidge wrote from the *inside out* and failed as a novelist to harmonize his romantic aspirations with his dedication to reality. His literary fate seems to confirm DeVoto's judgment that writers cannot serve the mythical West and the historical West simultaneously. Even today, with Western best-sellers of the past being mass-produced in paperback editions, Coolidge remains neglected. His books, if they can be found at all, are usually old library discards languishing on the shelves of used-book dealers featuring large collections of "Westernalia." He has endured some sophisticated literary claim-jumping. Perhaps, more than any other writer of Westerns, he has furnished characters and plot material for subsequent novelists to renovate and adulterate to suit public taste, and publish as their own.

QUALITIES THAT WEAKENED Coolidge's fiction enhanced his works of nonfiction. While comparisons between fiction and nonfiction may be meaningless, I will hazard the opinion that it is in the latter genre that Coolidge did his best work. Despite a fragmented and sketchy caliber to *Texas Cowboys*, *Arizona Cowboys*, and *Old California Cowboys*, which were written in the late 1930s primarily as librettos for the photographs he had taken thirty years earlier, these books are "on point." In his trenchant criticisms of western writing, DeVoto remarked, "The cowboy is a set of conventions and clichés which originally may have had some relation to the life it pretends to depict but speedily lost it in obedience to the fantasies of the eastern consumer." Subsequent critics from J. Frank Dobie to Joe Frantz and William W. Savage have echoed DeVoto's lament. "It is possible," wrote Savage, "that the cowboy image is already so debased through commercial exploitation that people who might otherwise deal maturely with it cannot get into the mood."

Yet what gives stature to Dane Coolidge's western prose is that it is not *contrived*. Equipped with the naturalist's powers of observation, the creative artist's gift of insight, and a genuine scholar's insistence upon fact, Coolidge was able to recognize that the unembellished data of range life possessed more depth, drama, and color than the hackneyed performances staged by pedestrian imaginations. One episode from *Texas Cowboys* deserves to be reproduced at length because it reveals the author's discriminating ability to capture essences and, thereby, to reflect accurately the true nature of the cowboy. Coolidge is recording the shifting of five hundred choice white-face cattle from the north to the south side of Black River to remove them from the covetous eyes of hungry Apaches. "If I've got to keep those Indians in beef," the owner of the Cherry-cow outfit exclaimed, "I'm not going to feed them my choice Herefords." Coolidge's account follows:

After a three-days rain and a month on the northern range the cowboys were a hard-looking lot. They were dog-tired and ready to strike; and old Dad Hardiman, the wagon-boss, was in bad with them.

Contrary to their judgment he had decided to cross the herd when they first hit the river, hoping that the thirsty ones behind would shove the leaders in and make them swim across. It was noon and the hands were hot and dusty and starving for something to eat; but, after holding up the herd to think it over, Dad finally rose in his stirrups and shouted:

"Let 'em go!"

The men in front gave way and the leaders trotted down with their tongues out; but, though the cowboys in the rear whooped and swung their ropes, the great mass of tired animals, instead of rushing forward, barely got off a walk. Then it was that Dad, who was in a high state of nerves, began to shout contradictory orders.

"Turn 'em back" he yelled, riding down to the point. "No, let 'em go" he hollered, waving his hat to the drag-men; and while he raged up and down, the disgruntled cowboys pushed the cattle steadily forward and shoved them into the river. At the shore the leaders lowered their heads to drink, others crowded in and horned them on. They edged out further and further, still drinking, until suddenly they slumped off into deep water and began to

swim. But, seeing no place to land on the other side, the leaders drifted down with the current and came ashore where they had started from.

After a futile effort to drive them in again, the boss finally gave orders to let the cattle drink and called on Cherrycow Charley for dinner. There was a short wait while the cowboys filled up with beef and bread and then, after changing mounts, they went at it again. Cutting out about fifty head at a time they jumped them over a low bank into the river and finally steered them across. It was sundown by the time the last animal was over and, wet and bedraggled, the cowboys rode back to where Charley had done his worst.

But as the first cup of coffee took the edge off their grouch, their unrestrained Texas humor burst forth. Old Dad had worked harder than any of them but his plans had gone wrong, and the memory of his contradictory orders still irked them.

"Let 'em go!" observed an iron-faced puncher solemnly spearing a hunk of beef from the oven.

"Turn 'em back!" shrilled another and a rumble of sardonic laughter passed around the circle of cowboys, sitting cross-legged in the outer darkness. Dad sat by the fire, supping his coffee and peering out from under his hat, but no one was worrying about him. They were short-handed already and fifty miles from town and they knew they would not get fired.

"Sho, sho, boys," pleaded another voice, boldly mimicking the boss, "don't yell so loud—it only skeers 'em!" And the whole bunch laughed until you could hear them a mile.

There is nothing remarkable about this incident, and therein lies some of its distinction. Anyone who has trailed cattle from the wagon and the cow camps immediately becomes involved in the action. John Wayne, happily, is off the set. There is no histrionic "Move out!" accompanied by a majestical gesture that hypnotizes the herd into doing his bidding; no theatrical loping from point to drags and from drags to point as the Master Trouble Shooter bakes his horse into a lather saving the situation when all other hands have failed. Instead, there is old Dad Hardiman, saddle weary and anxious, barking superfluous orders, forgetting under the pressure that experienced cowhands seldom need to be told what to do. And despite the fellowship of craftsmen and competence, there were more instances of the Devil snapping his chain than occasions when everything proceeded smoothly and efficiently as though he were napping in the shade. The real mettle of the cowhand consisted of patient tenacity. He always completed the job before he threw down his bedroll, regardless of the time it took. And when the Devil's hide was finally hung on a fence rail, a tin cup of hot, silty, alkalied water laced with coffee was all that was necessary to restore humor and set off a succession of chaffing in which each hand topped his precursor as though they were taking turns tossing live cartridges into the campfire. The scourges of the working day were transmuted into the macaronic philosophy of the range.

Only when Coolidge let the statement slip by that the cowboys "were dog-tired and ready to strike" was his lens out of focus. Cowboys never "strike," though they might all "quit." There is a significant difference. Coolidge was certainly aware of it and probably wrote the sentence carelessly, never suspecting that a random, on'ry reader would notice that he had spilled a loop.

The episode on Black River testifies to the cowhand's independence and lack of reverence for authority. As Coolidge observed, "While a cowboy will do a tremendous amount of work in the line of duty, his untamed spirit will not permit him to 'supe' for anybody." The authentic cowboy—that is, the top hand who settled for cowpunching as a way of life—remained essentially an anarchist—not in the sense of a violent zealot conducting a terroristic crusade against institutionalized tyranny, but in his naive faith in spontaneous intelligent, ethical behaviour. He didn't cotton to taking orders nor did he hanker to give them. The code of this equestrian fraternity, fortified by gumption, simply assumed that a hand knew his job and could be trusted to do it. As a logical consequence of this premise, most difficult situations were expected to resolve themselves. Orders, instructions, restrictions, injunctions, organizational planning, production schedules were regarded as impediments to doing the right thing in the right way at the right time. To fence in common sense was about as smart as to butcher your only bull.

Coolidge, though scarcely remembered today, was a man who knew cowboys. He knew their contempt for cowards, liars, frauds, and braggarts with leaking mouths. Above all, he respected their integrity, honesty, and compulsion to speak the truth openly and unequivocally, even if to do so was to bust open an active wasp's nest. As an example of their concern for veracity, Coolidge cites an instance in which "a feller was boasting about a rattlesnake he'd seen that was a hundred yards long" and turned to a cowhand for confirmation.

"Ain't that so?" he asked with clear expectation of support.

"Well, I don't know," the cowhand replied guardedly. "It started to go down the hole before I got there and I only saw the last twenty-five feet."

Cynical cowhands claim that anyone who drank from the Hassayampa River could never again tell the truth. Like an optimistic steer and the witness to the superelongated reptile, Dane Coolidge "tried." In the romance of the West, fact and fancy may be irreconcilable. In his subterfugenous photography, Coolidge came close to combining these antagonistic elements. **AW**

Owen Ulph *is professor of history and humanities at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, and the proprietor and operator of Bear Trap Ranch near Lamoille, Nevada. He is the author of a number of magazine articles dealing with the cowman's West.*

Riding the Cherrycow Chuck Line

A Dane Coolidge Portfolio

CAPTION MATERIAL ASSEMBLED BY OWEN ULPH
PHOTOGRAPHS ON THIS AND THE FOLLOWING ELEVEN PAGES ARE FROM THE DANE COOLIDGE COLLECTION AT THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

THERE were no *cowboy photographers* before the First World War. There were some journeymen such as Alexander Forbes who photographed cowboys along with other subjects while practising their itinerant profession. (See *The American West*, July 1968.) What makes Dane Coolidge unique is that he was a photographer who was not "just passing through." He had ample time to study his subjects at leisure as he rode along while they worked cattle for one of the most spectacular border outfits in the Southwest—the Chiricahua Cattle Company, picturesquely dubbed the "Cherrycow." Coolidge took the photographs in the portfolio that follows over a five year period between 1909 and 1914.

"The Cherry Cow outfit had given up the use of a chuck-wagon because of malpai lava. The men that rode for the company had to lash their beds on broken-down cow ponies, and the wagon-boss, despite his title, had to do without a wagon."

FROM : TEXAS COWBOYS

Thawing a bronc on a frosty morning —sometimes called "letting the hammer down." The idea is to trim the odds in your favor. Put his head in a well-anchored vise, if possible. Otherwise, tie his left hind leg to his neck—in the rocks or a place "where it ain't pleasant for him to stomp around."

Hal Young, the "horse camp man," defending his allocation of mounts to Dad Hardiman, the wagonless wagon boss.
"The hoss and the hand should deserve each other."

A Cherrycow line shack: catching up on the news before taking off on the roundup . . . but in the line shacks, papers and magazines were likely to be twenty years old—or more!

First stage of the roundup. Working the remuda at the horse corrals below the bluffs of the Blue River Rim. Believe it or not, each horse in the bunch knows which one is wanted and will do its best to give the condemned victim cover.

"The only way to get them shod was to noose them one at a time in a strong rope and nail the shoes on between kicking spells. When a horse got too bad the boys hog-tied him, threw him down, bound all four feet together and hammered the shoes on regardless."

FROM "TEXAS COWBOYS"

"Let 'em go!" "Turn 'em back!" "No, let 'em go." Moving premium stuff from the north to the south bank of Black River. The day old Dad Hardiman's saddle slipped (pages 34–35).

"No, they did not wrap themselves in a single blanket and, with a saddle for a pillow, fall into a dreamless sleep. That is all right for poetry, but saddles make very poor pillows and the Cherry Cow men had to sleep."

FROM "TEXAS COWBOYS"

Luxury living resumes on the lower CCC as the chuck wagon once again becomes standard roundup equipment.

A Texan dragged his calf to the branding fire at a walk—a Mexican vaquero at a brisk trot—a Papago Indian at a gallop. "Mexicans are bad enough, but I've seen twenty-one Papagos' ropes on one cow, and more of them in the air."

FROM "OLD CALIFORNIA COWBOYS

"First calf of the 1914 rodeo! The Americans looked on and smiled scornfully, while Red told how they branded in Texas."

FROM "OLD CALIFORNIA COWBOYS

"Cows were coming from everywhere, puffing and bellowing, tossing their heads, scatting over rocks as each dash for freedom was checked, then turning and ramping on."

Rye Miles, livestock inspector and an ex-sergeant in the Arizona Rangers (1914), poses for a Coolidge portrait. The pistol, worn so as not to be snagged by brush, was used for shooting snakes. If the snake had legs, Miles "aimed a mite higher."

"Heel-flies," Rye Miles called Mexican vaqueros, because they were always at the heels of some cow. If there was no other excitement, they would let a wild one escape, then ride whooping to haze her back.

"Shipping Out." The remainder of eighteen hundred spayed Cherrycow heifers after the Indians of the San Carlos Reservation had stolen over a thousand head from the beef roundup. "All I ever sell these Apaches," stated a cynical trader, "is rope, butcher knives, and salt." Lo reimbursed himself for the theft of his lands and the destruction of his natural food supply. Thus faded the glory and grandeur of a great Cattle Empire.

Coolidge entitled this photograph "The Wild Bunch rides in."

Into where? . . .

Into here—of course!

The proprietor kept a live rattlesnake in a glass jar. If a puncher could hold his hand against the glass when the snake struck, drinks were on the house. If he jerked away, it cost him ten silver dollars. "Teddy Blue" Abbott lost $200 bucking the bartender's game.
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Silverwork and Ships

"And Eagles Sweep Across the Sky: Indian Textiles of the North American West" can be seen at the **Baltimore Museum of Art** through November 13. The display includes blankets, rugs, and baskets, many of which have never been exhibited before.

The Malaspina Collection, a small but important group of items from a 1789–1794 Spanish scientific expedition to the North American Pacific Coast, will be on display at the **Oakland Museum in California** from October 30 to December 4 and at the **Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.,** from mid-December through January. The exhibit, which includes rare artifacts from Nootka, Tlingit, and California Indians, plus maps, drawings, and coastal profiles by expedition members, originated as a joint project of the Museum of New Mexico and the Spanish government.

Completed in October and now on display at the **Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago** is a reproduction of a **Pawnee Indian earth lodge.** The traditional-style nineteenth-century lodge is furnished with buffalo-robe-covered beds; and clothing, weapons, tools, and trade merchandise of the period.

The restored **Federal Court House in Galveston, Texas,** originally built in 1861, is pictured on a historic preservation post card recently issued by the U.S. Postal Service. Other examples of historic American architecture will appear periodically in this new series.

At the Laboratory of Anthropology of the **Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe,** two exhibits of Indian art will be on display through December. The first, **"The Pueblo Pottery Tradition,"** includes more than one hundred examples of the Pueblo art; and the second, **"Indian Silverwork of the Southwest,"** features pieces dating from 1865 to 1925.

To emphasize the several periods in western artist Charles Russell's life, the **C. M. Russell gallery** at the **Montana Historical Society** in **Helena** has been redesigned and divided into three sections: "Kid Russell"—1864–1886; "Some Dreams Come True"—1886–1896; and "... Dead Man's Prices"—1896–1926. Personal belongings, enlarged photographs, and Russell subjects, including models and bronzes, are included in each section, while a central display case contains a group of Russell's letters arranged for easy reading.

San Ildefonso Pueblo blackware pottery by Maria Martinez and her son and grandson is currently featured at the **Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona.** Entitled "The Martinez Tradition," the exhibit will continue through November.

The **San Francisco Maritime Historic Park** has been transferred from the state of California to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area administered by the National Park Service, and fees to visit the park's **historic ships at Hyde Street pier** have been reduced. The ships on display include the *Alma* (1891), the last-remaining San Francisco Bay scow schooner; the *C. A. Thayer* (1895), a three-masted lumber schooner; the *Wapama* (1915), a wooden-hulled steam schooner; the *Eureka* (1890), a wooden-hulled ferryboat; and the *Hercules* (1907), one of the last ocean-going steam tugboats still afloat in North America.

"Frontier Community," the fifth in a series of twenty permanent regional history exhibits to be installed at the **Kansas City** (Missouri) **Museum of History and Science,** will open November 19. The exhibit focuses on Kansas City as a commercial center during the 1850s, the era of westward expansion. On display will be a blacksmith's shop, a working printing press, a dry goods store, as well as historic graphics, maps, and artifacts.

Continued on page 55

Best Books on the Cowboy

REVIEWED BY W. H. HUTCHINSON

HE MADE and makes our country's contribution to the horsemen of the world—blood brother to the wild riders of the steppes and the *caballeros y vaqueros* of Hispanic lands. He came in all colors, tongues, and creeds; and he was the last of our frontier types to be molded by the work that he did and the land in which he did it. He remains the most enduring symbol of almost three centuries of westering by a restless people—the American Theseus-in-leather-leggings—the COWBOY.

The literature about him ranges in time and content from the thud-and-blunder dime novels of the 1860s to a two-part *New Yorker* "Profile" in 1977. The books noted in this essay are those which one man's opinion holds to be truer to the cowboy in life than most of the other literature about him. Also, they are books which should be readily available in any self-respecting library or through interlibrary loan. All can be purchased, and though a few will be hard to find, many are available in paperback. (Editions listed herein are the most recent.) Fiction is excluded from this sifted selection with some deserved exceptions.

To understand the cowboy, it is necessary to grasp the symbiotic relationship between men, horseflesh, and cattle. This is beautifully expressed in two books by one man: *The Longhorns* (Grosset & Dunlap, 1957, paper) and *The Mustangs* (Little, Brown, 1952) by J. Frank Dobie. The books are redolent of mesquite smoke and the taste of meat cooked over the coals that spawned it, and they speak very deeply of the lore of the land and the people of that land where the cowboy had his American origins.

To grasp the life he led in the days of Walter Webb's "Cattle Kingdom," there is no better beginning than Andy Adams's *Log of a Cowboy* (University of Nebraska, 1964, paper), first published in 1903. It is regarded as fiction, but this seems by courtesy only. It is constructed without artifice from the minutiae of daily

COWBOY BY CHARLES M. RUSSELL, CIRCA 1885 CULVER PICTURES

life on the long trail north from Texas to Montana in the nineteenth century. A rollicking recall of this same life is E. C. ("Teddy Blue") Abbott and Helena H. Smith's *We Pointed Them North* (University of Oklahoma, 1972), which casts highlights and low on life up the trail and after on the northern ranges.

In his own words, Ernest M. Fletcher was "a cowboy first, last and all the time, except when I was a cattle rustler." He also was a fence for stolen cattle, a gambler, and a veteran of five years in a state's guest house. His recall of his life and times is aptly titled *The Wayward Horseman* (Sage, 1958). Mat Ennis Jones was *Fiddlefooted* (Sage, 1966), wandering from Texas to Montana during the first half of this century. It is solid stuff; and if Jones swung a sticky loop upon occasion, he kept it to himself.

No appraisal of the nonfictional cowboy would be worth the type to set it if it excluded Will James, "The Gilt Edged Cowboy," as Tony Amaral has dubbed him. His autobiography concealed some things that he wished would remain forever unknown, but *Cowboys, North and South* (Arno, 1975) is worth the reading. His illustrations have an impact that cannot be gainsaid.

Classed as fiction, again by courtesy, J. P. S. Brown's *The Outfit* (Dial, 1971) brings James's hellity-larrup riders of fifty years past into the very present of stock trucks and absentee owners, and does it with a fidelity few can match.

Ross Santee's *Lost Pony Tracks* (University of Nebraska, 1972, paper) remains enshrined in my heart as the best depiction of the self-reliant, skilled craftsman that was the cowboy; and Santee captures the essential and hardbought freedoms of spirit and action that were at the core of his individuality. His illustrations, unlike James's, have a haunting, evocative sense of the immensity of space in which his humans and their animals lived and moved and died.

For interpretations of the cowboy and the life he led by those looking at him from the "outside-in," so to speak, there is no better single volume than *The American Cowboy: The Myth and the Reality* by Joe B. Frantz and Julian E. Choate, Jr. (University of Oklahoma, 1968). Another excellent treatment in this vein, and one distinguished by superb illustrations, both photographic and otherwise, is Bart McDowell's *The American Cowboy in Life and Legend* (National Geographic Society, 1972).

Those who read these books with an inquiring mind and an understanding heart will acquire a much deeper appreciation of the so-called Hired Man on Horseback than ever they can from his depictions in cigarette advertisements and snuff commercials on television. AW

W. H. Hutchinson, *professor of history at California State University, Chico, is the author of a number of books on the West as well as more than two hundred fact and fiction pieces in magazines ranging from the* Huntington Library Quarterly *to* Ranch Romances.

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RECENT WESTERN BOOKS

True Sod: Sod Houses of Kansas by Barbara Oringderff with illustrations by Leah Johnson *(Mennonite Press, North Newton, Kansas, 1976; 168 pp., illus., intro., notes, biblio., index, $20.00).*

In treeless, stoneless western Kansas, early settlers made skillful use of the material at hand to create a unique structure—the sod house. In this informative book on the "soddy," the author includes many fascinating details about pioneer life on the Great Plains as well as more than two hundred period and modern photographs representing forty-seven Kansas counties. For modern-day pioneers, there are detailed instructions on how to cut and lay up sod blocks, how to set in the door and window frames, and how to construct the sod roof.

The Spell of New Mexico edited by Tony Hillerman *(The University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 1976; 105 pp., $5.95).*

"What is it about New Mexico . . . that seems to turn the imagination fertile?" editor Tony Hillerman asks in the preface to this book. A rich and varied response is provided by the essays that follow; authors include C. G. Jung, D. H. Lawrence, Ernie Pyle, Oliver La Farge, Lawrence Clark Powell, and Mary Austin.

Researching, Writing, and Publishing Local History by Thomas E. Felt *(American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, 1976; 165 pp., illus., intro., biblio., index, $6.00 cloth, $4.50 paper).*

"This book is directed to anyone who has already admitted an interest in studying the past and is now considering doing something about it. . . ." So begins this informal and informative guide to writing local history. Arranged sequentially "from first curiosity to first edition," it should prove invaluable to anyone embarking on a first history-writing project.

Fortunes Are for the Few: Letters of a Forty-Niner edited by Duane A. Smith and David J. Weber *(San Diego Historical Society, San Diego, 1977; 136 pp., illus., notes, appen., biblio., index, $12.50).*

The story these interesting gold-rush letters reveal is a sad one. Young Charles Churchill set out for California in 1849 with high hopes, but his gold-mining efforts failed and he turned to store-keeping and, eventually, to drink. By 1855 he was dead. Ironically, the brother to whom most of his letters were addressed prospered at home in Ohio, coming to California only when he could retire in comfort on its golden shores. Churchill's letters are enhanced by the editors' notes and an excellent group of illustrations.

The Western Art of Harold Von Schmidt edited by Walt Reed *(Peacock Press/ Bantam Books, New York, 1976; 93 pp., illus., intro., $6.95 paper).*

Harold Von Schmidt believes that a painter's most important job is to capture the spirit of the subject. The brilliantly colored plates in this collection of Von Schmidt's western art aptly display his versatility in illustrating the restless, exciting spirit of the American West.

The Character of the Country edited by Loren N. Horton *(Iowa State Historical Department, Iowa City, 1976; 136 pp., illus., maps, intro., index, $2.75 paper).*

When strong competition forced the closure of the lead mines in Swaledale, England, many of the townspeople emigrated to the American Midwest. In 1876, forty-six years after the shutdown, Englishman James Lonsdale Broderick traveled to Dubuque, Iowa, to visit relatives who had settled in that prosperous urban center. The diary that Broderick kept during his American stay is both literate and interesting.

Papa Jack: Cowman from the Wichitas by Paul McClung with drawings by Robert A. Gartland *(University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1976; 225 pp., illus., intro., index, $9.95 cloth, $3.95 paper).*

"I was eighteen. Papa Jack was eighty-two. . . . It was hard for me . . . to sort Papa Jack out from Quanah Parker and the Wizard of Oz and my great-great-uncle who was a Texas Ranger. . . ." confesses the young woman who recorded Oklahoma pioneer Papa Jack's story for her father, Paul McClung. But it is Papa Jack who describes himself best: "I maybe done a lotta things wrong, but I kinda growed with the country. . . . Pioneer man. Rancher man. Broke cowboy. Tramp barber. Big trader on the Fort Worth cattle market. I done everything I wanted and no son-of-a-buck ever had more fun doing it." This book is his story.

A Gift to the Street by Carol Olwell *(Antelope Island Press, P.O. Box 31508, San Francisco 94131, 1976; 195 pp., illus., biblio., index, $12.95 paper).*

Carol Olwell's passion for old houses, which began with the memory of her grandfather's beautiful Victorian home, demolished in 1945 to make way for a medical office building, led to creation of this fine photographic study of San Francisco's Victorian facades. A bit of history, several floor plans, and the location of each house are also supplied in this large-format book.

Early Texas Oil: A Photographic History, 1866–1936 by Walter Rundell, Jr., *(Texas A&M University, College Station, 1977; 260 pp., illus., biblio., index, $19.50).*

This large-format volume about oil in Texas begins with a shot of the state's first producing well, dating from 1866; and ends with one of a 1930s-style filling station. Between these, historian Walter Rundell, Jr., uses a rich array of contemporary photographs to describe the social history of Texas oil.

Pioneer Steelmaker in the West: The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company 1873-1903 by H. Lee Scamehorn *(Pruett Publishing Company, Boulder, Colorado, 1976; 231 pp., illus., maps, notes, biblio., index, $19.95).*

This thorough, well-researched account traces the development and remarkable growth of a small Colorado mining company into a corporation that today is a leader in the nation's steel industry. One hundred and forty-two interesting photographs visually re-create the corporation's history.

They Came to the Mountain: The Story of Flagstaff's Beginnings by Platt Cline *(Northern Arizona University with Northland Press, Flagstaff, 1976; 364 pp., illus., appen., biblio., index, $12.50).*

Author Platt Cline, a former editor and publisher of the *Arizona Daily Sun,* has combed late-nineteenth-century newspapers and other sources to reconstruct this thorough history of early-day Flagstaff. His focus is on the 1880s, when Flagstaff grew from a railway camp into an established town close to the beautiful San Francisco peaks. **AW**

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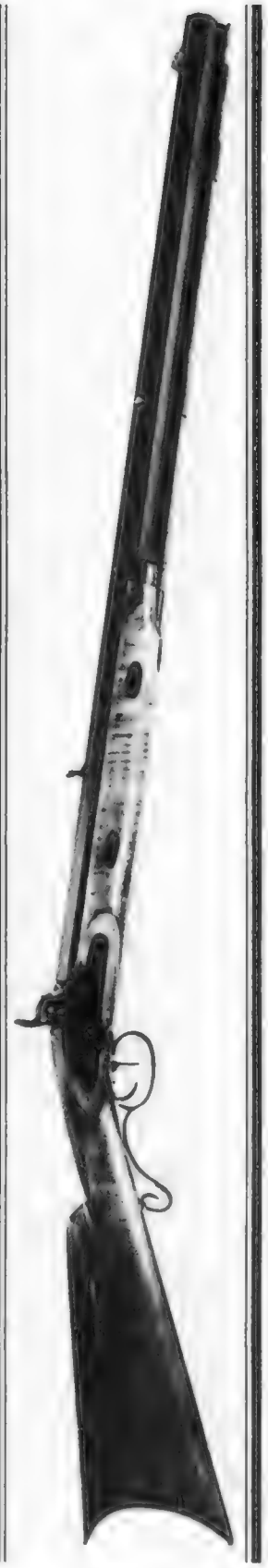

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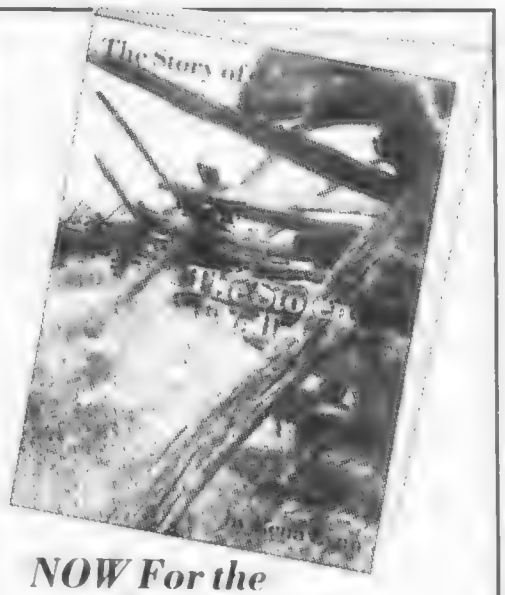

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Forty-Niners

REVIEWED BY JOHN E. BAUR

THESE THREE BOOKS offer invaluable data on routes to and life in gold-rush California. Doetsch's work discusses the medical and physical problems of overlanders. He ably presents the con-

Journey to the Green and Golden Lands: The Epic of Survival on the Wagon Trail by Raymond N. Doetsch *(Kennikat Press, Port Washington, New York, 1976; 112 pp., intro., illus., references, index, $9.95).*

Off at Sunrise: The Overland Journal of Charles Glass Gray edited by Thomas D. Clark *(Huntington Library, San Marino, California, 1976; 215 pp., intro., illus., biblio., appen., index, $12.00).*

We Were 49ers!: Chilean Accounts of the California Gold Rush translated and edited by Edwin A. Beilharz and Carlos U. López *(Ward Ritchie Press, Pasadena, California, 1976; 254 pp., intro., illus., biblio., $9.95).*

temporary state of medicine both off and on the trail. Dysentery resulted from bad water, while poor overland sanitation produced typhoid and cholera. The unwary suffered from a diet heavy in carbohydrates and light in proteins and vitamin C. Eyes and lungs became infected from dust, while heat stroke, sunburn, cracked skin, and mosquito bites tormented pioneers who almost always had sore feet and aching joints as well. (Few *rode* west!) In the lowlands malaria appeared, and highlands offered Colorado tick fever. As usual, man was his own worst enemy: heavily armed youths often shot themselves and others. Doetsch also details minor afflictions—few baths, little privacy for natural functions, sleeping in wet clothes. No wonder he concludes many arrived on the Coast both sick and poor.

Charles Glass Gray's overland journal of 1849 offers no startlingly new data but does give the highly perceptive impressions of a young New Jersey man traveling with the Newark Overland Company, captained by his uncle, Dr. John S. Darcy. Unlike most people in these three books, Gray went west not for gold but adventure. Despite his love for scenery, which he describes through various literary quotations and exceptional serendipity, Gray also records the journey's many troubles. Here are the trail perils Doetsch chronicles! Wagons broke down. Oxen became ravenously hungry. Gray literally had to eat crow, and rheumatism troubled him. The deaths of two friends even prompted him to make a will. Yet he enthusiastically describes capturing a wolf pup, the Continental Divide, salmon trout, and various individuals. Unlike many Forty-niners, Gray had little prejudice: he found Indians beautiful and Mormons intelligent and pleasant.

Editor Thomas D. Clark's extensive explanatory footnotes, sometimes covering a quarter-page, are helpful and occasionally even more interesting than the diary. He provides a twelve-page bibliography and overland illustrations by Goldsborough Bruff, who traveled the route that same golden year. Clark adds travel accounts by Darcy, which appeared in New Jersey papers, to supplement Gray's words.

In 1849–50 about seven thousand Chileans also came to California, briefly becoming its second largest foreign group. They suffered great persecution, and most had left by 1851. Although bitter, Chileans never blamed all Anglos and even praised the vigilantes for attacking their oppressors. This book is the first to tell the story from the Chilean view.

Among the six writers whose memoirs are herein included is Vicente Pérez Rosales, who believed that the Chileans' violent resistance to oppression prompted more severe animosity. Ramón Jil Navarro took careful notes on the scenes of atrocities in towns and diggings, where *Chileños* were robbed, cheated, whipped, ear-cropped, head-shaved, and killed.

Comedy appears here amid tragedy. Pérez Rosales enjoyed miners' tales, hunting, and boating, and illustrated his work with comic poetry and sketches. Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, one of Chile's great men, viewed Anglos as pragmatic and business-oriented. Others agreed.

A decade later, in 1860, Pedro Ruiz Aldea wrote a "happy ending" when he showed how *Chileños* at last were being welcomed to California as able farmers! AW

John E. Baur *is a profes[illegible] at California State Universi[illegible] has written three books on California and the West as well as numerous articles and book reviews.*

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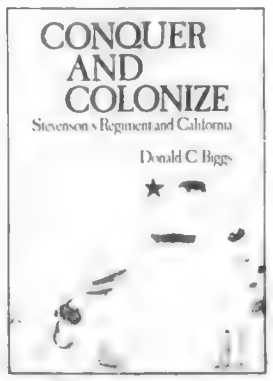

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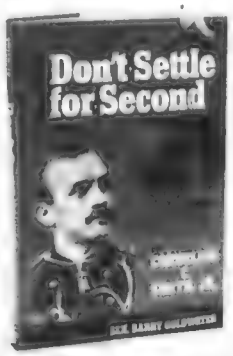

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Erna Gunther, who is herself an outstanding expert on the peoples of the Northwest, has provided a sensitive translation and adapted the original work for exciting 20th-century reading. Handsome illustrations include one original map, and 75 line drawings.

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The Chemehuevis by Carobeth Laird *(Malki Museum Press, Banning, California, 1976; 377 pp., maps, appen., glossary, index, $15.00 cloth, $8.95 paper).*

REVIEWED BY VICKI LEON

CAROBETH LAIRD'S second book literally bursts at the seams with information, like one of the fat seed pods eaten by the Chemehuevi Indian people she so lovingly describes.

Make no mistake, however. "Information-packed," in this instance, does not mean dull or turgid. Her no-nonsense prose cuts cleanly through the material about this Colorado-River-basin people, sorting a lifetime's gathering of vocabulary, myths, customs, taboos, and anecdotes into logical and fascinating form.

The book is dedicated to George Laird, whose dual role as her husband and major informant on things Chemehuevi imbues its pages with a firsthand intimacy and vigor.

Although the book touches on the material aspects of the nomadic Chemehuevi culture—its basketry, foodstuffs, hunting methods—it is largely concerned with its intangible aspects. As Carobeth Laird explains: "The real wealth of the Chemehuevi never consisted of that which could be stored in the ground, worn on the person, or carried on the back. They had a 3-fold inheritance: their language, their myths and their songs."

Several chapters are devoted to the recounting and interpretation of the lusty, poetic, wryly humorous myths. But the most original tradition of the Chemehuevis were their hereditary songs and the territorial rights which ownership of them conveyed. These melodies were musical maps of a man's hunting territory and defined his kinship to other Chemehuevis. When someone said, "How does that song go?" he basically meant, "What route does it travel?" The songs were sung on both ritual and social occasions, except for the Talking Song, reserved for solemn use by the high chiefs.

As Carobeth Laird ruefully notes, much of her original material on the Chemehuevis has been lost. But what remains—tattered song fragments, stories of stoicism and laughter, names like Bitter Frog and Mockingbird Runner—is impressive enough. It is a fitting memorial to the man George Laird must have been. **AW**

Vicki León *of San Luis Obispo, California, is a travel writer and consultant whose major relaxation is history.*

David Lavender's Colorado by David Lavender *(Doubleday & Company, Garden City, New York, 1976; 227 pp., illus., maps, biblio., glossary, index, $24.95).*

REVIEWED BY JAMES K. FOLSOM

DAVID LAVENDER was born in Telluride, Colorado, and though "the exigencies of making a living" took him away as a young man, he has never really left home. *David Lavender's Colorado* metaphorically completes the earlier semi-autobiographical account of his Telluride years which appeared in his work *One Man's West.*

It is a book which is double in focus, describing at once the externals of Colorado life and the author's love for the land that has made him what he is. From the latter perspective *David Lavender's Colorado* is no mean addition to that grand American literary tradition of meditations upon nature best exemplified by *Walden.* Just as *Walden* is at once about a place and Thoreau's response to that place, so is this volume about Colorado and Lavender's attitude toward it.

Lavender mentions his debt to photographer Lee Boltin, who taught him to seek character rather than panorama in landscape, and this distinction nicely emphasizes the book's strengths and weaknesses. As *panorama* it is competent but unexciting, for all its exceptional artwork. Many informative guidebooks to Colorado exist already, and this volume adds little new material. Lavender's real subject is the *character* of the land: how man, for better and worse, has changed it and how the land in turn has responded to man.

The record, Lavender shows, is ambiguous, and ultimately tragic. The Anasazi, who built a civilization at Mesa Verde which they mysteriously abandoned; the miners who came, saw, conquered, and left; the settlers whose dams have tamed the wild rivers into placid lakes; the wilderness-seekers, whose very attempts to enjoy it have brought about its destruction: all are cut from the same cloth.

Lavender hopes the future will not see only variations on this same dismal theme. He believes man's awareness has been changed, that—in the fashionable phrase—his consciousness has been raised.

I wonder. **AW**

James K. Folsom *is a professor of English at the University of Colorado. He has written books and articles about various aspects of the West.*

WESTERN HISTORY TODAY

(Continued from page 48)

The Amon Carter Museum of Western Art in Fort Worth, Texas, opened its **new wing,** containing a theatre, research library, and storage and office space, on October 30. The new area was planned by architect Philip Johnson, who also designed the original museum structure. Also featured at the museum (through November 13) are selections from the museum's permanent collection which illustrate the westward movement.

An interpretative exhibit on the nineteenth-century **Plains Indian ghost dance religion** will be on view at the **University of North Dakota Art Gallery in Grand Forks** from November 21 through January 2, 1978. Entitled "I Wear a Morning Star," the traveling display previously appeared at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

When Oklahoma was admitted to the Union on November 16, 1907, a **mock wedding** was held on the steps of **Guthrie's historic Carnegie Library** to join a young Indian woman, representing Indian Territory, and a cowboy, representing Oklahoma Territory. That wedding will be reenacted, and a sculpture depicting the 1907 ceremony unveiled, during a celebration at the library this November 16.

A **restored schoolhouse** is now open to visitors to the **Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher, Oklahoma.** The building, one of the few in the state preserved in the original country schoolhouse style, has been authentically furnished by the county teachers' association.

The Gaslamp Quarter, a sixteen-block area of predominantly Victorian buildings from the period 1880–1910, has been named **San Diego's first historic district.** The quarter, a victim of urban decay since the 1940s, currently contains many adult bookstores, pawn shops, and old hotels. The San Diego Historical Site Board, with the help of city officials and local property owners, hopes to revitalize the area, one of the most architecturally interesting in the city. AW

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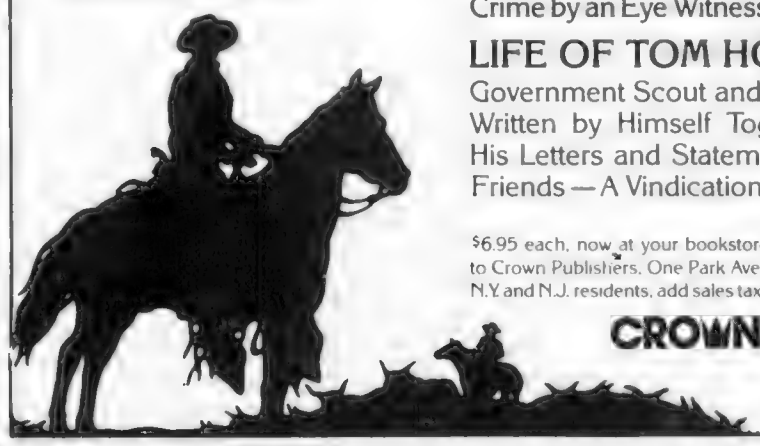

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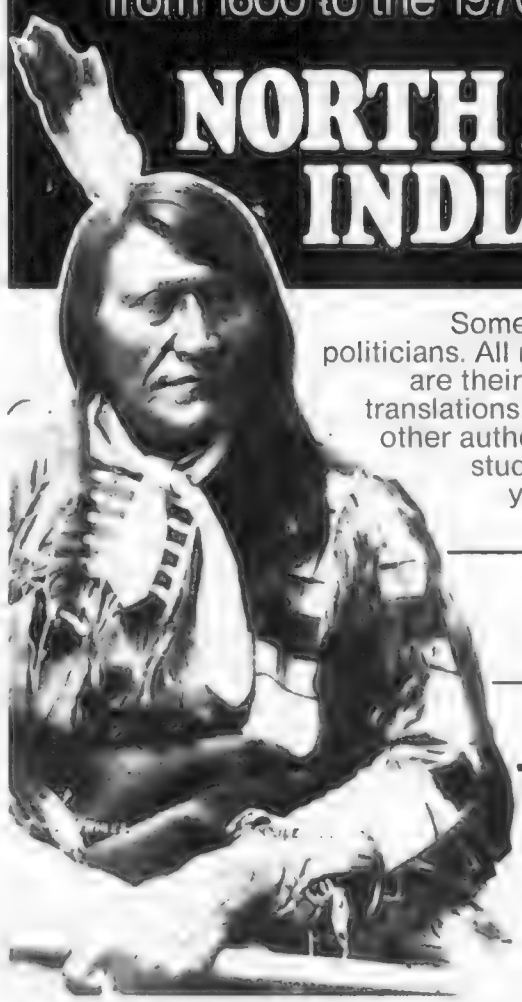

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Frederick J. Dockstader, the author, grew up on Indian reservations. A noted scholar and author, he was until recently director of New York's Museum of the American Indian.

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Aspects of the American West: Three Essays by Joe B. Frantz, foreword by W. Eugene Hollon *(Texas A & M University, College Station, 1976; 82 pp., $5.00).*

REVIEWED BY ROBERT W. RIGHTER

JOE B. FRANTZ is one of a small group of historians who have an uncommon ability to interpret the West, both past and present, in the broad strokes which bespeak of the mature historian. This slim volume, offered at a modest price, brings together three of his finest efforts at synthesizing the western experience.

The essay entitled "Yellowstone National Park: Genesis of an Urban Solution" reviews the establishment of the park and then wrestles with the dilemma which continually haunts the National Park Service: how to "entertain" so many of us and yet maintain the natural integrity of the parks for future generations?

Two essays, entitled "Western Impact on the Nation" and "The American West: Child of Federal Subsidy," attempt to delineate the impact of the West on the nation and vice-versa. Frantz concludes that "space and natural resources" may be the West's most enduring gift to the nation. Few today would argue against this thesis. More controversial is his idea that the West offers a "beacon to the world illuminating the belief that progress is accidental and miraculous and unplanned." Frantz admits that this faith is "not an unmixed blessing."

While the impact of the West on the nation may be somewhat nebulous, the author is positive and unrelenting in exposing the myth of the Westerner as an individualist scorning the protection and assistance of the federal government. Frantz gives evidence that while the Westerner talked one game he played another. The facts are that at every stage of development the West has pleaded for, demanded, and received federal subsidies in amounts often disproportionate to its population. The author exposes that no section is better at boondoggle than the arid West, and what is termed "socialism in Tennessee is called necessity in Arizona."

Provocative in nature and enduring in subject, here are three imaginative essays liberally sprinkled with insight and western wit. They will entertain, enlighten, and perhaps enrage. In fact, reading Frantz may be the next best thing to having Bernard DeVoto back again in the "Easy Chair." AW

Robert W. Righter *is assistant professor of history at the University of Wyoming.*

Great Plains Command: William B. Hazen in the Frontier West by Marvin E. Kroeker *(University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1976; 216 pp., illus., maps, biblio., notes, index, $9.95).*

REVIEWED BY ROGER L. NICHOLS

FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, William B. Hazen served as an army officer in the West. Graduating near the bottom of his West Point class in 1855, he was sent to Oregon. By 1858, Hazen had been assigned to the Texas frontier, where he distinguished himself tracking and defeating Indian raiding parties.

During the Civil War he served under Generals Grant and Sherman, obtaining the rank of brevet major general of volunteers. He returned to the West in 1866 as an inspector general and then received command of the Thirty-eighth Infantry, a new Black regiment. In 1868, General Sherman chose him to supervise the Southern Indian Military District. A year later he became colonel of the Sixth Infantry, a position he retained until 1880.

Because Hazen was not a "blood and guts, hell-raising" person, the author claims that he did not fit the stereotype of the frontier army officer. This misses the point that his career resembled that of many Plains officers. After the Civil War he accepted a reduction in rank to remain in the army. In the West he led no famous charges and achieved no major victories; rather he rode a desk chair into obscurity.

Like many good officers, Hazen found little challenge or personal satisfaction in army routine. His earlier Civil War successes and obvious ability made service in Dakota Territory seem like exile. The relative isolation of his assignment must have stimulated Hazen's contentiousness, but his feuds with both superiors and subordinates were representative of that era. Even his denunciation of the Plains as unfit for most habitation stemmed in part from frustration.

This book is not a biography, for it concentrates on Hazen's public actions. His motivations and personality are not developed, and the man remains only a name most of the time. While his army career offers some useful insights about American military affairs and Indian policy after the Civil War, it sheds little new light on the history of the American West. **AW**

Roger L. Nichols, *a history professor at the University of Arizona, has written on Indian affairs and the western army.*

By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States, 1900–1940 by Mark Reisler *(Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1976; 312 pp., charts, biblio., appen., index, $14.50).*

REVIEWED BY GERALD STANLEY

IN *Mexican-American History: An Assessment* (1975), Arthur Corwin observed that there was no published history dealing with U.S. immigration policy toward Mexico or American attitudes toward Mexican emigration. Now there is.

Based upon records in the National Archives, the Washington Records Center, six Anglo manuscript collections, and appropriate secondary works, Mark Reisler's study of Mexican labor in America includes perceptive chapters on the evolution of immigration policy toward Mexico and on Anglo attitudes toward Mexican immigration. Other chapters focus upon the Mexican worker in agriculture, industry, and during the depression; and build upon the earlier works of Paul Taylor, Manuel Gamio, Carey McWilliams, and Leo Grebler.

Reisler's central thesis is that Mexican laborers "contributed . . . the essential labor upon which much of the southwestern part of the United States was developed" and that their story is "one of enduring poverty and isolation."

Arguing that the relationship between the Mexican worker and American society was strictly economic, Reisler shows how the Mexican was welcomed in periods of prosperity but rejected by the white majority in depression times. This rejection stemmed from the Anglo perception of the Mexican, and Reisler demonstrates convincingly that the nineteenth century xenophobic stereotype of "brutal desperado" was replaced in the twentieth century by the biological stereotype of "racial inferior," always docile, manageable, indolent.

The flaw in the book is that Reisler devotes only sixteen pages to the many Mexican labor strikes in the period, while several strikes, such as the copper strike led by Flores Magón, are ignored. Furthermore, while the index to *Mexican Immigrant Labor* lists 157 Anglo names, only 19 Mexican names appear.

Yet, this is a serious, scholarly book on an important topic and a significant contribution to Chicano history. **AW**

Gerald Stanley *is an assistant professor of history at California State College, Bakersfield, who teaches courses on the American West and the Chicano experience.*

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Windsinger by Gary Smith *(Sierra Club, San Francisco, 1976; 175 pp., intro., illus., songs, $7.95).*

REVIEWED BY STEPHEN MIKESELL

WINDSINGER is a specialized autobiography, at once a personal history, a tribute to the wilderness, and a plea for its preservation. It succeeds on all three counts.

Gary Smith, with obvious enthusiasm, introduces the reader to the various phases of his life—growing up in Idaho; rangering in the Sawtooth wilderness; cowboying on the sagebrush steppes of Utah; mountaineering in the canyonland of the Southwest. The emphasis, however, is not on the narrative but on the spiritual meaning of the events described.

Each "story" is treated as material for a song, the appropriate song being included at the end of each chapter. The songs deal with the spiritual regeneration people sometimes find in the wilderness —what Frank Waters calls "spiritual ecology"; what Wallace Stegner calls the "geography of hope"; what Roderick Nash places in historical perspective in *Wilderness and the American Mind*.

Smith's stories also serve as vehicles for political and sociological observations concerning man and the environment. In some cases, Smith makes explicit reference to environmental controversies, such as the power plants in the Four Corners region. In other cases, he deals with a more fundamental drift in American society that threatens the environment and man's access to it.

Despite its success as an autobiography and an environmental tract, *Windsinger* has some artistic shortcomings. It combines several artistic modes—prose, poetry, photography—without exploiting any one to its full potential. The prose is sometimes conversational, given to hyperbole. The photographs, especially those that are in black and white, are surprisingly disappointing, falling below the standards of the publisher, Sierra Club Books. The poetry, like the prose, is sometimes undisciplined.

Perhaps this is a case of perspiration and inspiration not being in proper proportion. Smith is surely an inspired writer. The reader can most certainly look forward to more good books from him in the future. AW

Stephen Mikesell, *a native of Idaho, is currently a doctoral candidate in the history of the American West at the University of California, Davis.*

They Went Thataway by James Horwitz *(E. P. Dutton, New York, 1976; 281 pp., illus., $8.95).*

REVIEWED BY CARL EDWIN MAVES

LIKE SO MANY OF US, James Horwitz grew up star struck. Or more accurately, "cowboy-struck and hooked on the myth" of the West as codified by the movies.

Back then, Horwitz was an Oshkosh, Wisconsin "Front Row Kid" for whom, every Saturday matinee, the square-jawed gods of the silver screen rode horses and packed six-shooters and saw to it that the bad guys in the black hats bit the dust. He drank his milk from a Hopalong Cassidy glass, sang along with Gene Autry, and *believed*.

But did he really grow up? *They Went Thataway* tells how the adult Horwitz went in search of the myth and found it tarnished and yet still persuasive. He capsulizes its history from William S. Hart and Tom Mix to Roy Rogers and television; his most important chapters, however, recount his interviews with some of its surviving exemplars.

Gene Autry, he discovers, is a Los Angeles multimillionaire. Joel McCrea analyzes director Sam Peckinpah's magnificent *Ride the High Country* (1961): "I died at the end of that picture, and I felt it was kind of the end of the era." Duncan Renaldo, once the Cisco Kid, reveals that at his urging, Cisco and Pancho were patterned "after Don Quixote and Sancho Panza," while eighty-five-year-old Tim McCoy deplores the modern westerns in which "it's the tough guy who's the hero, not the fine upstanding fellow."

Yes, times have changed, and Oshkosh is a thing of the past. The cowboy fantasy world that Horwitz loved was exclusive and absolute. Exclusive, in that it was almost wholly masculine—those dance hall girls and schoolmarms never mattered very much—and absolute because Good always triumphed over Evil, and there was never any doubt about which was which.

But "the theater isn't playing those films anymore," James Horwitz concludes. "Which way did they go? They went thataway." The Front Row Kid is older now, and writes for *Rolling Stone*, and has his doubts. But he still listens for galloping hooves; he is still, like so many of us, hooked. AW

Carl Edwin Maves *reviews theater for the* Palo Alto *(California)* Times.

Editor's Note: *The following bibliographic note was omitted from "Pioneer Conservationist A.P. Hill:'He Saved the Redwoods'" by Victoria Thomas Olson, which appeared in the September-October 1977 issue.*

Excellent materials on Hill's efforts to establish Big Basin as a state park were available to the author and should be useful to anyone interested in the early conservation movement. Of prime interest are A. P. Hill's "History of the Redwood Park" (Sempervirens Club Collection, San Jose Historical Museum) and the more thorough *Acquisition of California Redwood Park* (San Jose, privately printed, 1927) by Hill's wife Florence and son Frank. Recent accounts of Hill's work include "A History of the Acquisition of the Big Basin as a State Park, 1902" by Thomas A. Jacobs (history paper, California State University, Hayward, 1972) and "Andrew P. Hill and the Big Basin, California's First State Park" (*San José Studies*, San Jose State University, November 1976) by Carolyn de Vries. Mrs. de Vries's 1975 San Jose State master's thesis, on which her article is based, is a particularly thorough description of Hill's efforts. A fine account of the park's history to the present is Alexander Lowry and Denzil Verardo's *Big Basin* (Los Altos, Sempervirens Fund, 1973). The staff and archives of the Sempervirens Fund are also invaluable sources of information. **AW**

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INCIDENT

(Continued from page 7)

cials—sheriffs, recorders, assessors, and the like. The territorial officials—the judiciary, U.S. marshals, Land Office bureaucrats, Indian agents, the really juicy plums on the patronage tree—were awarded from Washington as the territorial satraps deemed best. For almost forty years, New Mexico had been a national fief of the Republican Party and the private barony of the territorial officials thereof. For the benefit of purists, it is submitted that not even Democrats had deluded themselves during the two separated presidential terms enjoyed by their party's Grover Cleveland. For most of the years since the Civil War, the *jefe político* of New Mexico's Republicans, the leader of the so-called "Santa Fe Ring," had been an ex-Confederate officer from Missouri with a steel-trap legal mind and an uncanny sense of human frailty—Thomas Benton Catron, pronounced "catt-run."

When Henry Hastings Sibley led his rampaging Texans into the lower Rio Grande valley, he made Mesilla the short-lived Confederate capital of the Southwest and scared hell out of the Union. Colorado and California raised volunteers to reinforce the loyal garrisons, and the Coloradans got there first. The California troops, Carleton's Column, virtually all eastern emigrants to the Golden Shore, thus arrived too late to save New Mexico for the Union but just in time to save it for themselves by marrying the daughters of the *gente de razón y de pelo* and those of less exalted status as well. The livestock of these people consisted principally of sheep, and they followed the Church at Rome. The veterans of Carleton's Column became the field officers of the Republican Party, and they were said to vote their in-laws' sheep along with the members of the family, living and dead.

The "Craze for Cattle" that swept the Great Plains from the Gulf to Milk River after the Civil War slopped over into New Mexico. The men who trailed in the herds and stayed with them were Texians out of the old stock, whose religion was compounded equally of a militant Protestantism and a profound veneration of Robert E. Lee and "Jawn" B. Hood, Fifth Texas Brigade, CSA. They brought their own blood-feuds with them and a clan instinct that went back in time and space and tradition to a group of misty islands in a northern sea.

The coming of the railroad to southern New Mexico in 1881 brought another contingent of emigrants—mostly of Free Soil–abolitionist persuasion, many of them seasoned in the pre-War travail of Bleeding Kansas and then kiln-dried in the bitter guerrilla robberies that passed for honest war. Their occupational preferences were for the moldboard plow and barbed wire, or interest at 18 percent per month.

Political differences were personal differences—Ins vs.

Outs, Unionist vs. Secessionist, Sheep vs. Cattle, Free Range vs. Farmer, Churches vs. The Church. Add to these the Alamo-feeling of the Texians for the Hispanic New Mexicans, for the men who married their daughters, and for the offspring of these unions. Season the mixture with the intra-Texian blood feuds. It made no dish for vegetarians, and devotees of political neutrality either died young or bought a trunk. A brief sampling might provide the flavor.

The Democrats and the Republicans of Dona Ana County once managed to schedule their preelection mass meetings in the plaza at Old Mesilla on the same Sunday. This was either a regrettable mistake or a deliberate invocation of the ancient juridical principle of trial by battle, *a la* Lars Porsena and Horatius. When the oratory and gunsmoke cleared, there were nine dead and some fifty wounded; but the box score does not disclose the affiliations of the casualties. No one was ever indicted for these killings as the scrimmage was regarded, with some reason, as an act of God.

Las Cruces, which had gained preeminence over Mesilla by virtue of its railroad depot, was divided so sharply at times that Republicans walked on one side of the street and Democrats on the other. For political reasons, a certain judge of the Third Judicial District had his wife accompany him for protection when he travelled from court to court. *Nothing* was cause enough to start a gunfight that might endanger a *good* woman or a child.

Since the courts had held that there was no such thing as a criminal libel law in the territory, political journalism was uninhibited and political ownership of newspapers was the order of the day. Public opinion held that a man was no man at all if he did not resent aspersions as a man should.

In southern New Mexico, at least, the Democrats had their share of victories in these fire fights on the local level. For example, Pat Garrett, a Democrat since his Louisiana birth, was elected sheriff of Lincoln County to clean up the aftermath of the Lincoln County War. Parenthetically, if the gooey mess of sentimental pabulum overcooked by the Billy the Kid cultists can be scraped away, the Lincoln County War can be seen for what it was in 1878—a fight for control of one-quarter of the territory between two magnificent range bulls, Tom Catron and John "Jinglebob" Chisum, which Chisum broke off before he got gored. There was no effective high-level opposition to the "Santa Fe Ring's" control of the territory, however, until the early 1880s.

In either 1884 or 1885, a young Kentucky lawyer in his early twenties, the son of a Confederate raider, arrived in southern New Mexico via West Texas. He first tried his hand at mining in the Black Range camps, unsuccessfully, but there he formed an enduring friendship with a practical, hard-rock stiff named Edward L. Doheny. Moving down to Las Cruces, he hung out his shingle and plunged into politics, which was the métier that suited him. He was a lambent personality, a flamboyant pleader, a ruthless, opportunistic political infighter; and he gave the Democrats what they had lacked—effective leadership. He was, also, a man of raw courage who could fight with his gun when less drastic measures failed, and he proved it to the satisfaction of all but his adversaries. He wrote his name large in the annals of the Southwest—Albert Bacon Fall—and after he turned Republican and went onto the national stage, he left it linked forever in American history with two words—Teapot Dome.

Early in his legal career, Fall made the acquaintance of Oliver Lee, who had just finished fighting a small war to hold his range in the Tularosa Basin against cowmen who supposedly were backed by the "Santa Fe Ring." Lee needed an attorney who did not scare easily. Fall needed a field officer with the same kind of backbone. Their business association ripened into an enduring friendship and became an effective political coalition that demonstrated its strength one election day in Las Cruces.

Fall got wind that the Republicans intended to call out the local militia company, officered by Republicans, to protect the polls (the euphemism fooling none of those concerned). When the militia tramped up in gorgeous array to surround the polling place, they found themselves under the rifles of Oliver Lee and his riders, who had come into town during the night and occupied the roof of a building across the street. The militia prudently dispersed, and the Democrats won that election handily. From this distance in time, it seems that the need to destroy the Fall–Lee combination was behind the events that had put Lee, Gililland, and Rhodes to watching the skylines.

On January 21, 1896, the grand jury of Lincoln County had handed down two indictments against Oliver Lee and William McNew, a relative by marriage, charging them with cattle stealing and brand changing. Chiefly responsible for securing these indictments was Colonel Albert J. Fountain, a "Ring" Republican who once had been indicted as accessory before the fact in a gunfight against Albert B. Fall. In this instance, Fountain was acting in his capacity as special prosecutor for the New Mexico Stockgrowers Association. He had made a special trip from his Las Cruces home to attend this term of court at Lincoln, taking with him his nine-year-old son, Henry, who showed the dark beauty of his mother's Hispanic ancestors.

Colonel Fountain, his title stemming from his militia rank, started for home on January 30, 1896, carrying with him the papers relative to the indictments he had secured. Tied behind the buggy was a pony newly purchased for Henry's use when they got home. A loaded shotgun reposed in the seat between father and son, and Fountain, a *filibustero* in Nicaragua with William Walker, a veteran of Carleton's Column, and a seasoned Apache fighter, knew how to use it. Climbing out of Lincoln town, they rolled all that day down the high, pine-studded uplands of the Capitan-Sacramento ranges and spent the night with David M. Sutherland in the little town of La Luz. Leaving early the next morning for the long dry drive to Las Cruces, father and son were last seen alive by Saturnino Barela near Luna's Wells, on the edge of the vast, shifting, shimmering gypsum dunes called the White Sands.

The first of several search parties left Las Cruces on February 2, 1896. One of them was led by two officers of the militia company so discomfited by Lee and Fall; all were Republicans. The searchers found ample "sign" that the Fountains had been waylaid and, presumably, killed.

Their bodies were never found nor have they been found to this day. Large rewards were offered for apprehension of the killers, whomever they might be, including a purported $10,000 by the Masonic Grand Lodge of New Mexico of which Fountain had been an officer.

The charge that Oliver Lee, his relatives and friends, had done the killings gained quick circulation around Las Cruces. Inflammatory accusations, said to have been written by Tom Catron, appeared in the Las Cruces newspaper controlled by the Republicans, and there was a distinctly nasty feeling in the air. Into this came Oliver Lee, voluntarily riding over from his Dog Canyon ranch to offer to stand trial in court rather than in the press. His offer was refused by the authorities, and Lee and Fall soon founded a newspaper of their own in self-defense.

Officially, the Fountain case then slumbered for over two years. It is worth noting that the indictments against Lee and McNew in Lincoln County were dismissed by the territory when they came into open court, April 13, 1897. Unofficially, men on both sides rode in pairs and laid away extra stocks of cartridges. The lines of cleavage opened wide and deep, and this matter became a personal test of strength between Thomas Benton Catron and Albert Bacon Fall. Every personal, political, social, economic, and religious difference in southern New Mexico added its meed of fanaticism to the struggle, and there was no such thing as being neutral.

GENE RHODES'S RANCH in the San Andres was a Lee outpost and lookout. Besides his friendship for Lee, Rhodes had a very personal grudge against the "Santa Fe Ring." 'Gene's father, late colonel, Twenty-Eighth Illinois Volunteer Infantry, was a Mason as well as a Republican, but he had neither joined the "Ring" faction nor been asked to since his arrival in the territory in 1881. In fact, he and his family had lost their homestead, representing two years of work, to a member of the "Ring" who wanted the water it controlled. Thereafter, his Civil War record secured him an appointment from President Benjamin Harrison as agent for the Mescalero Apache; but the "Ring" ousted him after eighteen months by machinations which gave his son a .45 bullet through his scalp and thirteen head wounds from pistol-whipping when he tangled with a Las Cruces constable and a pseudo-posse of six who were trying to frame him on a drunk charge. These things had made 'Gene Rhodes a Democrat for cause.

The already legendary figure of Pat Garrett entered the Fountain case early in 1897. Garrett had left New Mexico in 1889 after several political disappointments administered by John W. Poe, his associate in the hunting of Billy the Kid. He had spent the years between at Uvalde, Texas, a friend and horse-raising and -racing associate of John Nance ("Cactus Jack") Garner, later a vice-president of the United States. At the urging of influential New Mexicans, Garrett took up residence in Las Cruces, renounced his life-long adherence to the Democratic Party, and became a registered Republican. The county commissioners promptly appointed him sheriff to fill out the term of Numa Raymond, a prominent Las Cruces merchant who no longer wanted the job. Garrett was elected sheriff the following year.

There seems little doubt that Garrett was influenced by the prospects of the renewed fame that would be his if he solved the mystery of the Fountains' disappearance. The Republicans were elated at securing the services of so famous a man hunter. The Lee adherents, taking into account the rewards still posted in the Fountain case, felt simply and directly that the apostate Garrett had been hired to solve the case and achieve a political victory by killing Oliver Lee and such other Democrats as might come handy through the smoke. Yet there was no overt action for almost a year after Garrett's appointment. Indeed, there is one recorded instance during this period of Garrett, Lee, Fall, and assorted friends sitting in the same poker game. This period of watchful waiting came to an end on April 2, 1898, just three months to the day after Oliver Lee had been married in San Antonio, Texas, and brought his bride back to share his life in New Mexico for better or for worse.

On the day cited, Sheriff Garrett swore to and received bench warrants from District Judge Frank W. Parker for the arrest of Oliver Lee, James Gililland, and William McNew, charged with the murders of Albert J. Fountain and Henry Fountain. McNew was arrested in Las Cruces the very next day and lodged in jail without bail. In due course, he was released, but his incarceration gave him no part in the events that followed. Lee and Gililland did not come into Las Cruces this time, and it took Garrett some months to go after them.

On the morning of July 13, Lee and Gililland were sleeping atop a flat-roofed house at the Wildey Well, one of Lee's cow camps in the Tularosa Basin. As it came good light, Garrett and a four-man posse, without any prior demand for surrender, opened fire from a distance of thirty-seven feet. Lee's bed was shot to pieces before he could reach the loaded rifle by his side, but neither he nor Gililland was touched. The element of surprise was more than offset by the posse's inexplicable inaccuracy, and they came off second best in the fight that followed. Garrett's reputation could be restored in but one way, and knowing this, Lee and Gililland went actively on the dodge, determined never to surrender to Garrett nor be placed in his custody where they would risk the time-honored gambit —"Shot while trying to escape!" It was at this point that 'Gene Rhodes joined them.

While they were roaming the broken country of Sierra and Socorro counties, where Garrett's writs did not run, A. B. Fall busied himself in Santa Fe. The result of his labors with the governor and legislature was a tribute to his genius for politics. Tom Catron was a member of the upper house, in practical command of its actions; he disliked Lee and hated Fall as the Devil hates a Baptist preacher. W. H. H. Llewellyn, a "Ring" Republican, one of whose sons had been a posseman at Wildey Well, was a member of the lower house. He held an abiding personal enmity for Lee and regarded Fall, politically, as just above Beelzebub. There was, however, a distinct coolness between Catron and his minions and Governor Miguel A. "Gilly" Otero. Fall played upon this and upon all the per-

sonal and political strings known to him with such grace, skill, and agility that none of those being plucked heard the symphony being formed until it was too late.

On January 30, 1899, the legislature created a new county, named Otero in honor of the governor, out of portions of Dona Ana, Lincoln, and Socorro counties. When the metes and bounds of Otero were reduced from the legal language of its creation into lines on a map that everyone could comprehend, it was seen that Fall had counted coup, perhaps the greatest of his long career.

Otero County had been given that portion of the White Sands where the Fountains had vanished, thus gaining jurisdiction over further prosecution of the case against Lee *et al*. Furthermore, Governor Otero had appointed George Curry, an old and valued friend of Oliver Lee who had just returned from service with Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders, to be sheriff of the new county pending its organizational election. Alamogordo, naturally, would become the county seat, but until it acquired the necessary appurtenances of such status—a jail, a courthouse—Curry had no seat of office. Since Otero County still fell within the Third Judicial District presided over by Judge Parker from Las Cruces, Curry worked with and through him in what followed.

USING THE HG RANCH, owned by the husband of Lee's half-sister, as a letter-drop and with 'Gene Rhodes playing the role of go-between, Lee carried on negotiations with Sheriff Curry. His conditions for voluntary surrender were simple: he would not be turned over to Garrett's custody, not even temporarily, and he would not be jailed in Dona Ana County. With the governor's approval, Curry agreed to these conditions. Judge Parker in Las Cruces was so informed and was advised that the fugitives would surrender themselves to him through 'Gene Rhodes.

It should be borne in mind, because Lee, Rhodes, and Gililland bore it in mind, that Garrett's warrants had not been cancelled and thus were still good if he could serve them inside the boundaries of Dona Ana County. Additionally, a substantial sum of the original reward offers in the Fountain case was still posted. For these reasons, no definite date for the surrender had been set in advance when the three men left their horses in the Bar Cross *remuda* and waited for the southbound train to Las Cruces, where Rhodes would turn his two friends over to Judge Parker. Rhodes passed the time by writing a telegram to the judge and improving his friends' natural disguises.

When they first rode up to the Bar Cross wagon, a visiting rider, who did not know they were coming, broke his lifelong habit of not asking damn fool questions of hard-riding strangers. Taking a long look at the pristine white hat, he said, "Oliver, what-in-the-hell are you wearing them whiskers for?" Whereupon Lee threw his new hat upon the ground and danced on it quite featly. Having had his point made for him, Rhodes then wangled a verdigris-stained derby from a section hand to replace it. For years afterwards, the story of Lee in a derby hat titivated New Mexico as the midget in J. P. Morgan's lap affected a later generation. Rhodes then found a pair of bilious blue glasses for Jim Gililland and was more than pleased with the result.

As the train slowed on flag at Aleman, Lee and Gililland "surrendered" to 'Gene Rhodes, as a one man *posse comitatus*, by giving him their pistols. Rhodes stuffed these in the waistband of his pants along with his own, where they all were partially concealed by the canvas brush jacket he wore. The three waited on the open rear vestibule of the head-end coach, a baggage-smoker combination, until the train began to move. Rhodes then wrapped his message to Judge Parker around a silver dollar and threw it to the somewhat nonplussed telegrapher.

Stepping inside the smoker, Rhodes found it empty except for the news butcher's wares piled on the end seat nearest the vestibule door. Gililland made room for himself on this seat to discourage the "butch" from staying any longer than was necessary to replenish his stock. He faced the baggage end of the car. Lee sat across the aisle facing the same direction. Rhodes, having helped himself to a copy of *Cyrano De Bergerac* from the butcher's stock, took a seat on Gililland's side, ahead of and facing him. Thus Rhodes with all the artillery was facing the spot from which any trouble might be expected to find them, and he could see it coming through the half-glass door in time to be prepared.

Unbeknownst to Rhodes and his prisoners, Captain John R. Hughes, Texas Ranger Force, was riding that train on his way back to El Paso from official business in Santa Fe. Hughes was a personage in the Southwest, and his earned reputation was large in the land. He was known by sight to Rhodes, Lee, and Gililland from their visits to El Paso, the great, stately pleasure dome of the Southwest and its visible hub as well. That they, in their frame of mind, would not comprehend that Hughes would have no interest in local New Mexico affairs—matters quite outside his jurisdiction—has a bearing on what followed.

Two sidings and twenty miles below Aleman, the train made its first scheduled stop—at Rincon, just inside the Dona Ana County line. Waiting in front of the depot as the train pulled in was the readily recognizable lanky length of Sheriff Pat Garrett. He could not have been tipped off by the telegraph operator in Las Cruces in time to get himself to Rincon. Why he was waiting there for this particular train on this particular day never has been explained except by the "sixth sense" supposition which may be as valid as any. When Garrett disappeared from Rhodes's angle of vision as he strode towards the rear of the train, there was nothing to do but wait for the showdown.

It did not come until the train had worked up to speed outside the Rincon yards, and it was double-barreled when it came. Walking up the coaches, Garrett spotted his fellow law officer, whom he knew well, and Hughes was in the lead when they entered the smoker. 'Gene Rhodes was at close quarters with two of the most coldly efficient gunmen, using the term as we once used "swordsman," in the history of the West.

What shadows lay athwart Rhodes's mind were never uttered nor put to paper, but they seem obvious. He was committed to defend his friends, and this defense was based upon a simple foundation—no surrender to Pat Gar-

rett. No fulsome oaths had been sworn, no names signed to paper, back there at Aleman siding. Only the hard core of a man who would charge hell with one bucket of water stood between abject surrender or the *ley del fugo* for Oliver Lee and Jim Gililland.

Hughes put one foot on the seat beside Jim Gililland and leaned across him to pick up a book from the butcher's stock. Garrett stood beside him in the aisle, leaning over to look out of the window by Oliver Lee, apparently meditating his course of action. It must have seemed a needlessly long meditation to Rhodes. He tried valiantly to give the impression of a bum reading a book, but his eyes could not hold to the printed page and his hands had trouble staying put. He knew that he had all the guns against two most formidable adversaries.

How long this tableau lasted is unknown. In such circumstances, the seconds rasp against the nervous system. It came to an end when Garrett slowly straightened up; looked down at Oliver Lee under that noisome derby; swung his gaze intently at Rhodes and then around Hughes at Jim Gililland. Then he left the car, Hughes close behind him. To give the measure of those three men in the smoker, 'Gene Rhodes still kept all the guns.

After each of the stops between Rincon and Las Cruces, Garrett walked the train alone, making sure that no one had boarded from the offside while he was watching the depot passengers. Each of his expeditions wound up in the smoker, and each time Garrett looked intently at the three men therein and made no move. Whether he ever recognized them during the, to Rhodes, interminable train trip remains a great unknown.

Recognition became an accomplished fact when the train ground to a halt in Las Cruces, where, evidently, someone was leading a double life or was trying to copper his bets both ways. Ben Williams, Garrett's chief deputy and a veteran of the Wildey Well fight, was at the depot to meet him. So, too, was Vincent May, a Lee partisan, to bring his friends word of the situation in Las Cruces. The two groups did not settle their differences then and there, as Hollywood would have staged the scene. That they did not is due entirely to the fact that Garrett made no move, and Garrett made no move for good reason. Like Wild Bill Hickok and Wyatt Earp and the other towering figures in the Powdersmoke Pantheon of the West, Garrett had an acute sense of the realities in any given situation. In this one, he did not act because he could not know that 'Gene Rhodes held three of the four pistols he and Ben Williams would have to go against if they "turned loose their wolf." Had Garrett known this, it might well have been a different story, for Rhodes's reputation as a *pistolero* was openly and notoriously nonexistent.

The Lee group went directly to the home of Judge Parker, where Lee and Gililland were remanded officially to the custody of 'Gene Rhodes on a judicial warrant until Sheriff Curry could be notified to come and remove them to a repository outside Dona Ana County. The necessary note of relief in the whole day's proceedings came when Judge Parker, in his most official manner, advised Rhodes to secure a gun for the protection of his prisoners. None of those present actually understood what Rhodes said in reply—the state of his nerves and his cleft palate effectively combined to defeat comprehension—but the three six-shooters he pulled from the waistband of his pants spoke for themselves.

THE FOUR MAIN ACTORS in this drama suffered varying fortunes thereafter. Lee and Gililland were defended by A. B. Fall at their trial for allegedly disposing of the Fountains, and T. B. Catron served as a special prosecutor for the territory in this case. After eighteen trial days, the jury took less than fifteen minutes to acquit them. Thereafter, they picked up the threads of their lives as cowmen, contending against the natural hazards of drouth, poor grass, and cow-country interest.

Pat Garrett finished his term as sheriff and subsequently was appointed by Theodore Roosevelt to be collector of customs for the Port of El Paso. After four years in this office, he returned to Dona Ana County as a small rancher. On February 29, 1908, he was shot and killed while on the road between his ranch and Las Cruces under circumstances which never have been explained satisfactorily to this day. One Wayne Brazel, or Brazil, was tried for the murder and acquitted, his attorney being A. B. Fall.

'Gene Rhodes left New Mexico on April 18, 1906, because of a fist fight that he won. Thereafter, in exile from the life and the land he loved, he wrote the short stories, serials, and novels about that life and that land, most of them appearing in the *Saturday Evening Post,* that earned him Bernard DeVoto's accolade as "the Novelist of the Cattle Kingdom."

Among all these stories, almost a hundred of them, there is one significant omission, and Rhodes himself explained it in a letter to a friend of those New Mexico days: "Las Cruces was quite mad on politics. It colored every act and every thought, distorted them beyond belief. Consequence: I cannot write a decent story about Las Cruces." In all truth, he never did. The explanation may rest in this recall of those days and those politics and the part 'Gene Rhodes played in them. **AW**

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

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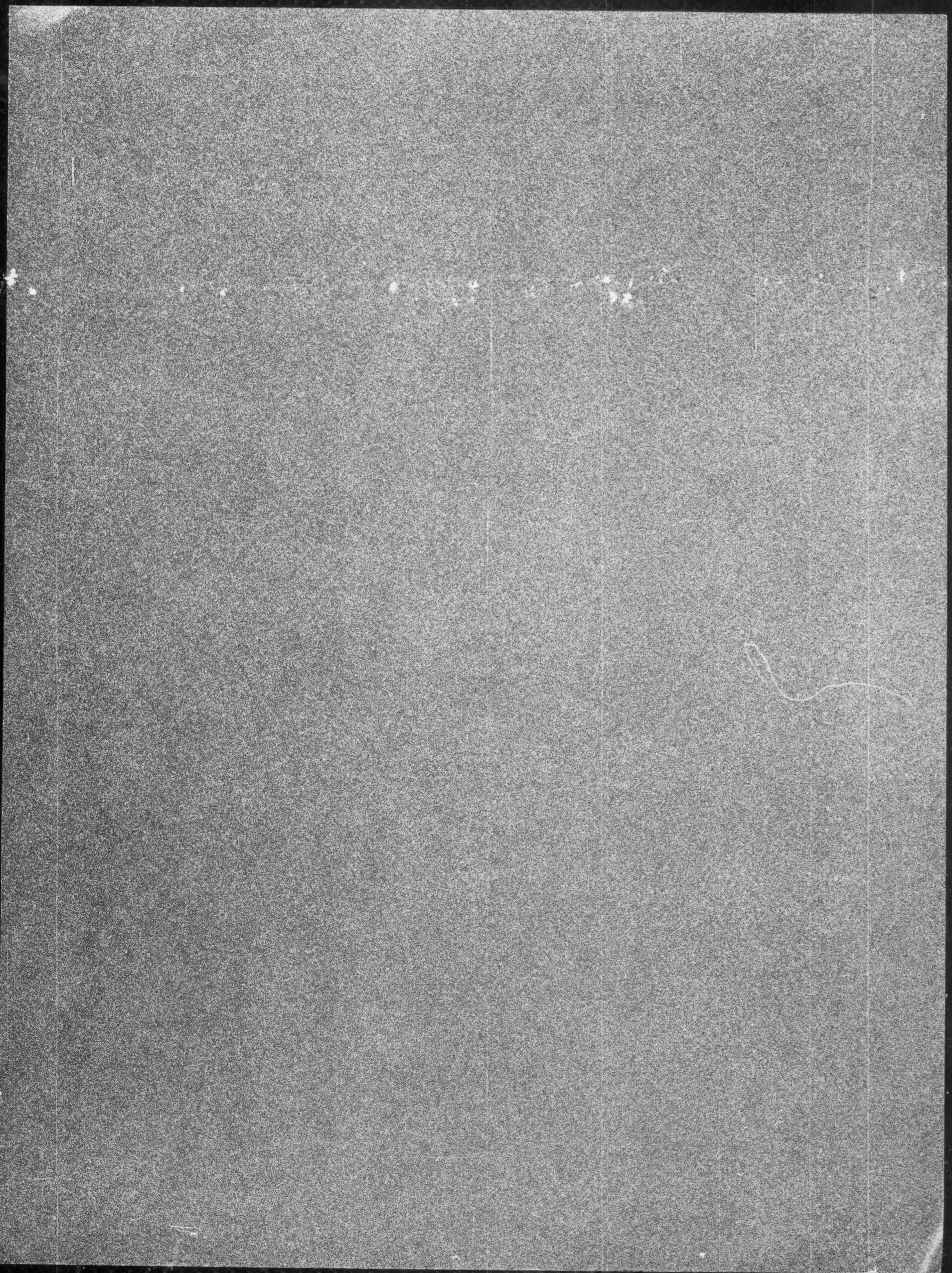

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